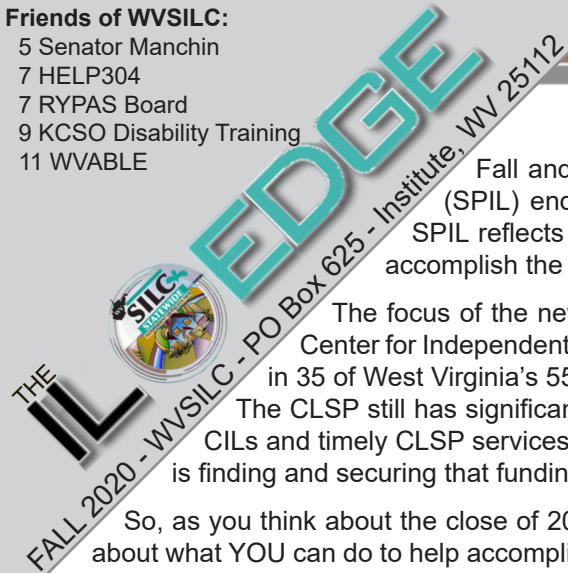


Friends of WVSILC:

- 5 Senator Manchin
- 7 HELP304
- 7 RYPAS Board
- 9 KCSO Disability Training
- 11 WVABLE



SILC UPDATE

Fall and cooler weather are starting to set in. The State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) ended and a new SPIL is beginning. The annual report on progress on the old SPIL reflects accomplishments and progress made in 2020. But much work lies ahead to accomplish the goals and objectives in the 2021-2023 SPIL.

The focus of the new SPIL is to ensure every West Virginian with a disability has full access to a Center for Independent Living (CIL) and to the Community Living Services Program (CLSP). Individuals in 35 of West Virginia's 55 counties still do not have full access to a Center for Independent Living (CIL). The CLSP still has significant waiting lists with no end in sight. The only solution to a statewide network of CILs and timely CLSP services without long waits is increased funding for Independent Living. The challenge is finding and securing that funding.

So, as you think about the close of 2020 and look forward to the bright promise of a New Year – I urge you to think about what YOU can do to help accomplish these goals. All of us need to make sure we communicate the need for CILs to be available in those 35 counties – the need for full funding for CLSP so you don't have to wait years for the services you need – the right of West Virginians with disabilities to live and participate fully in their communities. If you (or a family member) are a person with a disability – make sure you talk with your legislators, county commissioners, city councilmen/women, county emergency planning groups – all policymakers – about what YOU need to be able to live and participate fully in your community. If you are an advocate or you work at a CIL – be sure to invite those policymakers to visit so you can show them what you do and why these programs are important to individuals with disabilities.

Make a New Year's Resolution to do whatever YOU can do to share your story, our story, and encourage increased funding and support for the programs that can make it possible for ALL West Virginians with disabilities to live, work, participate, and contribute to their communities.

From the desk of:

Ann McDaniel
Executive Director

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."

IN THIS EDITION:



Boone Co. native says COVID-19 is 'real' p.3



Anne O. Weeks - President/CEO, Mountain State CIL p.2



Zoom catches up with new accessibility features for sign language interpretation p.5



WV Absentee Voting Information p.8

WV Centers for Independent Living

Appalachian CIL
Elk Office Center
4710 Chimney Dr.
Charleston, WV 25302
1-800-642-3003

Northern WV CIL
601-603 East Brockway Ave.
Suite A & B
Morgantown, WV 26505
1-800-834-6408

109 Randolph Ave.
Elkins, WV 26241
304-636-0143

Mountain State CIL
821 Fourth Ave.
Huntington, WV 25701
1-866-687-8245

329 Prince St.
Beckley, WV 25801
304-255-0122





FEEL OVERWHELMED?

CALL / TEXT **8 7 7 - H E L P 3 0 4**
CHAT **HELP304.COM**

WV'S EMOTIONAL STRENGTHLINE



If you're feeling anxious, overwhelmed, or emotionally exhausted, you're not alone.

Pandemic related stress is high. Many people are worried they or a family member will become sick. Some have lost jobs and insurance and are worried about meeting their family's basic needs. Making matters worse, routine and social structure have crumbled. With everyone under stress, some feel they have no one to turn to for emotional help.

According to a recent poll conducted by the American Psychiatric Association, 36% of Americans say COVID-19 is having a serious impact on their mental health and 59% feel it is having a serious impact on their day-to-day lives.

West Virginians are especially vulnerable. According to a 2018 CDC study, WV was ranked as the "least healthy" state concerning mental health, noting that 18.9% of respondents reported poor mental health 14 of the last 30 days. A new, free service aims to help West Virginians with COVID-19 related stress.

Help304, WV's Emotional Strengthline, offers support through a hotline, 1-877-HELP-304. This service is available 24/7. Callers will speak immediately with a professional crisis counselor who can help them move forward with new stress management strategies.

The phone number is also textable, and online chat is available at www.HELP304.com. ■



Anne O. Weeks - President/CEO, Mountain State Centers for Independent Living

Source: Mountain State Center for Independent Living

Anne Olivia Weeks is retiring on December 31, 2020, as President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Mountain State Centers for Independent Living and the fundraising arm of the Center, the Foundation for Independent Living.

Ms. Weeks has been involved with the Center since before it first opened on October 1, 1981. Anne implemented the original grant for funding to establish the Huntington Center for Independent Living. In 1983, she was hired by the board of directors to assume the responsibilities of Executive Director of the Huntington Center for Independent Living (HCIL).



Anne O. Weeks

In 1987, Ms. Weeks was again successful in a national competition to establish additional CILs, and on June 1, 1988, the Beckley Center for Independent Living opened, operating under the HCIL board with new board members from Beckley. In 1991 the Centers merged their names and became Mountain State Centers for Independent Living (MTSTCIL), and the board of directors

made Ms. Weeks a voting member of the board as President and CEO.

The Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law on July 26, 1990. During the first five years of the anniversary of the signing of the ADA, a celebration (planned by Anne and her staff) was held at the WV State Capitol. The first year, Anne and her staff were proud to have the late Justin Dart, known as the father of the ADA and who spearheaded the passage of the ADA as the celebration's keynote speaker. Another year, Ms. Weeks welcomed the late Ed Roberts, known as the father of independent living, to WV as the celebration's keynote speaker.

On the advice of their Regional Office of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, Anne and the MTSTCIL board of directors established the Foundation for Independent Living in 1991. This Foundation was to be chartered to be the fund-raising arm of Mountain State Centers for Independent Living. One of the first actions of the Foundation was to purchase the building at 821 Fourth Avenue to house the center in Huntington.

With the 1992 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services was required to create the Statewide Independent Living Council, a partner in developing independent living services in West Virginia. Ms. Weeks became the first chairperson of the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council and currently holds the position of council chair for the third time. Ms. Weeks is also vice-chair of the Tri-State Literacy Council.



After second chance at life, Boone Co. native says COVID-19 is 'real'

Source: [Coal Valley News](#)

CHARLESTON — Dave Sanders said he hopes his journey through life, death and life once again may make people think twice before dismissing COVID-19 as a hoax.



"If I can change or influence one person's viewpoint, it is worth it," he said via Facebook Messenger from a Kanawha County hospital.

You see, the 1988 Scott High School graduate is just beginning to try to speak again. The virus spread throughout his lungs, causing him breathing difficulties, which eventually forced physicians to put him on a ventilator for 32 days.

As a result of that experience, he's burdened with the task of finding his voice again.

"From not using my muscles during the time on the vent I became very weak," Sanders said. "In the beginning, I could not move without assistance and communication was a challenge. I couldn't communicate with the hospital staff or my family. I was passing notes with others to communicate my needs, which was frustrating."

He was sitting in silence after separation from the ventilator and was concerned for his future. Sanders, 50, has a 5-year-old son named Jonah. He wanted to see him again. While under hospital care he died and was revived. Once, his heart rate dropped below 30 and he was conscious the entire time — an experience he called "frightening."

"I didn't know if I would always have it (tracheostomy), or if I would ever be able to speak again," he said. "I wasn't sure if I would be able to walk and care for myself again."

Sanders said that, in a span of one month, he tested positive for COVID-19, then had three negative test results, positive again and currently has had three negative test results.

Sanders does have an underlying health condition. He was diagnosed in 2005 with type 2 diabetes, which he controls with medication. He was told that diabetes weakened his immune system, making him more susceptible to the virus.

"When I was first diagnosed, I really only had mild symptoms," he said. "I had flu-like symptoms including fever, chills, and body aches. After four or five days, I started experiencing trouble breathing. That is when I knew I was in trouble. I had never spent overnight in a hospital until now."

Sanders said he is thankful for a second chance and won't take anything for
(See COVID p4)

Tee Shirts For Sale

Fair Shake Network tee shirts are now available for sale at the cost of \$10 for members and \$12 for non-members. The cost of shipping is \$3 if you need the shirt to be mailed to you. The shirts are available in 3XL, 2XL, XL, M, L and S. They are red and have the FSN logo in the center of the shirt. You can go online and order at www.fairshake.org or call 304-766-0061. ■





(Anne continued from p2)

On behalf of the Statewide Independent Living Council, Ms. Weeks fought for and won their status as an independent non-profit corporation with a 501 (c)(3) designation from the IRS. She also established the Council's office and hired the Executive Director to ensure the Statewide Independent Living Council would have the necessary support and leadership for its role in independent living in the State of West Virginia.

Ms. Weeks has been recognized over the years for her work in the independent living movement and was a charter inductee into the West Virginia Independent Living Hall of Fame. This honor was bestowed on her by the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council at the Disability Caucus held in July of 2002. As part of the presentation, Ms. Weeks was recognized for her contributions to independent living in West Virginia with remarks including: *"In short, independent living in West Virginia would not be or look anything like it does today without her guidance, direction, and contributions to the movement."*

After retirement, Ms. Weeks will be continuing her work as an advocate in the West Virginia Independent Living network. ■



Anne O. Weeks - President/CEO, Mountain State Centers for Independent Living

(COVID continued from p3)

"My recovery has been nothing short of amazing," he added. "After 50 days of being hospitalized, I am able to speak now and starting to work on being mobile again. The trach will be removed within the next week. After no food or liquids for 50 days I am now eating meals. The feeding tube has been removed."

Sanders has worked in the behavioral health field for nearly three decades. He is open about his journey through addiction and feels that he can continue to help others find a path to recovery.

"As I was laying on the hospital bed with my heart rate dropping below 30, I was conscious and I asked God, if I'm supposed to be here, bring me back and I would share my story of recovery," he said.

"In my work, I focus on helping those in recovery from substance use disorders and mental health issues. Part of that work has included sharing my own story of recovery after seven years of active addiction and several years of struggling with depression and anxiety. I believe the only way to break the stigma on issues is to be open and share your experiences. I believe that is important with COVID-19 as well."

Sanders, who is divorced, kept his thoughts focused on his son, Jonah.

"I'm sure this has impacted him, especially since we couldn't talk for over 50 days," Sanders said.

"I now speak to him daily, although he's too young to visit. I have many friends and family members who have prayed for me and visited during my hospital stay."

Sanders said it is hurtful to see memes and politically driven posts about COVID-19 on social media.

"For those that are on social media posting memes and making political statements regarding COVID-19, I would ask that you consider the prospect of your friend or family member had a disease," he said.

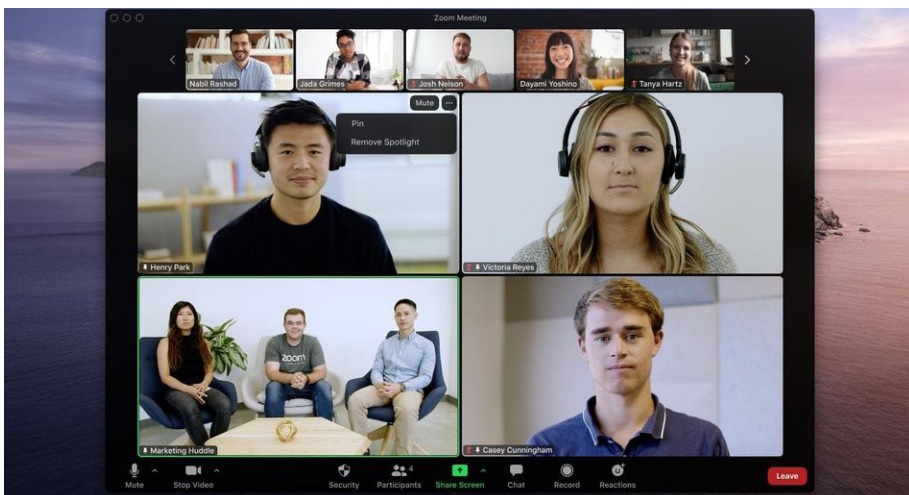
"Would you be posting the same information? If your family member were on a ventilator having a machine do their breathing for them, would you call the disease a hoax? Would you use the disease as a political platform to pass along misinformation?"

He concluded, "I doubt anyone reading this now would choose to use the disease as an opportunity to spread propaganda if they were impacted by it." ■



Zoom catches up with new accessibility features for sign language interpretation

Source: [Mashable.com](https://www.mashable.com)



For Zoom users who are part of the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community, some long-awaited features are here.

On Wednesday, Zoom added three major accessibility options, each mainly focused on making it easier for sign language interpreters to stay visible on the screen.

Jen Hill, a Zoom marketing manager, demonstrated on a Zoom call how users can now pin and spotlight multiple video screens at a time, to keep someone who is signing alongside the speaker or on the main screen and always in view. In Zoom's grid view, users can rearrange video windows to keep the interpreter where they want to see them. These changes are intended so that everyone is "able to live and work in a digital platform," especially during these pandemic days.

Following standards set through the A11Y digital accessibility group, which promotes inclusion for people with disabilities on tech tools and services, Zoom added spotlighting and pinning for multiple screens during video calls. Previously, you could only pin one video screen while on a Zoom call. For meetings (those are usually in speaker mode, which keeps whomever is speaking highlighted), users can keep more than one speaker's video centered, so there can be several videos pinned to the main screen. Only you as the user would see the multiple videos, so you can choose to keep an interpreter video pinned next to the main speaker, while other call participants might choose to just have the speaker centered on their screens.

Zoom hosts can give multi-pinning access to up to nine different people on a call. Hill explained that it's a resource-heavy ability intended for people who need it to see what someone is saying while on a Zoom call.

Multi-spotlight is pretty much the same thing as pinning, except the host can decide to keep up to nine videos in place for everyone to see, no matter who is speaking during the video meeting. This can help keep the sign language interpreter's video up alongside the speaker's. The photo at the top of the page shows what a screen with four different videos spotlighted looks like.

(See ZOOM p6)

Help Sen. Manchin Fight For Broadband In West Virginia

Source: [Joe Manchin](https://www.joemanchin.com)

In 1935, Franklin Delano Roosevelt created the rural electrification program to bring electricity to communities across America. Today, the fight to bring reliable broadband to rural communities across the nation is just as important. Without access to the internet, citizens can't learn, apply for jobs, launch new businesses, or become members of society who can give back to their communities. The sad fact is that many places in West Virginia simply do not have access to reliable broadband and the lack of access affects West Virginians every day. Back in 2015, the FCC released a coverage map that stated 99.9% of Americans had wireless coverage. I knew then what I know now: That is just plain wrong.

That's why I'm asking all West Virginians to submit your internet speed-tests, so we can prove to the FCC that our broadband coverage is well below the stated coverage. So far, your efforts have helped the FCC acknowledge that our providers are overstating their coverage, but we must continue to show where and how widespread the lack of broadband coverage is in West Virginia.

Once considered a luxury, access to the internet has now become a critical lifeline to society and the future of our economy. We need to ensure that all Americans, no matter their area code, have access to a high-speed, reliable internet connection. As your United States Senator, I won't stop fighting until all West Virginians have reliable, fast broadband in their homes, schools, hospitals, businesses, tourist attractions or anywhere internet is essential.

To submit your speedtest visit: <https://www.manchin.senate.gov/speedtest> ■





Vocational Rehabilitation Recognition Day

As you know, 2020 marks the 100-year anniversary of the public Vocational Rehabilitation program, both nationally and in West Virginia.

President Woodrow Wilson signed the Smith-Fess Act of 1920, known as the Civilian Vocational Rehabilitation Act, into law on June 2, 1920. In West Virginia, Governor John Jacob Cornwell issued a proclamation on August 30, 1920, accepting the provisions of the federal Smith-Fess Act, which essentially started the Vocational Rehabilitation program in our state.

As part of our state's celebration of these anniversaries and of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, Governor Jim Justice has issued a proclamation declaring October 19 as Vocational Rehabilitation Recognition Day.

While 2020 has been a difficult and challenging year requiring significant adjustments, it has also been a time of celebration. Through the 100-year anniversary of the Vocational Rehabilitation program, we have been able to reflect on the significance of the dramatic advances for people with disabilities. During this time period, one of the most meaningful developments has been opportunity – people with disabilities have the opportunity to access and gain an education, people with disabilities have the opportunity to participate in the workforce in jobs that would not have been imaginable at one time, and people with disabilities have the opportunity to fully partake in and contribute to their communities.

This is a time to celebrate the role we play as Vocational Rehabilitation professionals, as well as a time to applaud the success of workers with disabilities for their determination, innovation and hard work and to acknowledge employers for promoting diversity in the workplace by having inclusive hiring practices.

Congratulations on a job well done! Let us hope that the next 100 years are as successful as the first have been!

Marijane K. Waldron
Director ■

(ZOOM continued from p5)

Then, there's a feature in gallery view that all users — it's not limited to only nine per a call — will be able to use starting Wednesday: You can rearrange the placement of videos. You could move the interpreter's video box closer to the content on the screen, or order different screens as you like. This is supposed to help users keep a certain speaker or interpreter in a certain position on the screen, like closer to a presentation with graphs and charts.

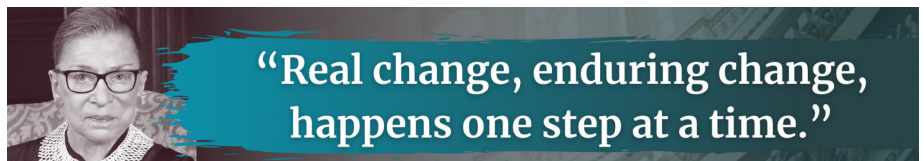


Hill summed up the additions to Zoom as ways you “can maximize control for your own particular needs.”

Looking at other video conferencing services, there are a mix of accessibility tools available. Cisco's WebEx is by far the most comprehensive, with all of Zoom's new features already baked into its product. Skype and Google Meet mostly provide transcription and real-time closed captioning as ways to allow users who are deaf use the services. Google Meet users have asked for something like Zoom's new pinning option as recently as this month.

Apple's FaceTime just got an accessibility upgrade with the release of iOS 14 last week. In group calls, FaceTime now auto-detects if someone is using American Sign Language, or ASL, and keeps that video front and center.

Zoom already offered keyboard shortcuts, screen readers, and closed captioning. As Zoom's first chief diversity officer Damien Hooper-Campbell said in a Zoom — naturally — call, “It's a continuous tinkering.” He and the team are “constantly learning” about how to best launch Zoom accessibility features and updates. ■



As we, as a nation, mourn the loss of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, National Disability Institute celebrates her life and many contributions to disability rights and inclusion.

In one of the most important disability rights decisions ever considered by the U.S. Supreme Court – *Olmstead v. L.C.* – Justice Ginsburg wrote, in her affirmation, that the institutionalization of people with disabilities perpetuates stereotypes that they are “incapable or unworthy of participating in community life.” The *Olmstead* decision not only gave people with disabilities the right to live in the community of their choice, but to also receive the services and supports to help them thrive as members of that community, no longer disenfranchised or isolated, but fully included.

We can think of no better way to honor Justice Ginsburg's legacy than to rededicate ourselves to the financial inclusion of people with disabilities so that they can be full participants in all aspects of our society, our economy and our country. ■

New, free hotline to offer emotional support, help for COVID-related stress

Source: [The Wayne County News](#)

CHARLESTON — If you're feeling anxious, overwhelmed or emotionally exhausted, you're not alone.

Pandemic-related stress remains high, as many people are worried they or a family member will become sick. Some have lost jobs and insurance and are worried about meeting their family's basic needs. With everyone under stress, some feel they have no one to turn to for emotional help.

According to a recent poll conducted by the American Psychiatric Association, 36% of Americans say COVID-19 is having a serious impact on their mental health and 59% feel it is having a serious impact on their day-to-day lives. West Virginians are especially vulnerable. According to a 2018 CDC study, West Virginia was ranked as the "least healthy" state concerning mental health, noting that 18.9% of respondents reported poor mental health 14 of the last 30 days.

A new, free service aims to help West Virginians with COVID-19-related stress. Help304, the state's Emotional Strengthline, offers support through a hotline, 877-HELP-304. This program is funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and administered by West Virginia's Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR).

The line will be answered by First Choice Services, a Charleston company that operates several other helplines, including the Help4WV addiction and mental health line; the Problem Gamblers Help Network of WV; the Suicide Lifeline; the Tobacco Quitline; the Jobs and Hope program, which helps those in recovery find employment; the ACA Navigator program, which assists with enrollment in free and reduced-cost health insurance; and 211, which helps locate resources such as food banks and housing assistance.

First Choice Services reported in a news release that calls for the past four months are up 15% over calls during the same time last year.

"Most of our programs are designed to solve a very specific problem, for instance, by linking someone with an addiction treatment program or locating a food bank for them," said First Choice Services' CEO, Lata Menon, in the release. "We've noticed, particularly over the last few months, callers are stressed and some just need to talk about their issues with someone who cares. They may not be suicidal or think of themselves as in crisis, but they want someone to listen to their concerns and help sort out their emotions, to prevent a crisis.

"We have professional crisis counselors who are trained to listen and help callers find the way forward. If they need additional resources, we have several in-house programs here that can help."

West Virginians can find free help by calling 877-HELP-304, texting 877-4357-304, or visiting www.HELP304.com for online chat. Information on all FCS programs can be accessed at www.FirstChoiceServices.org. ■

Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Board to fill vacancies

The West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council is recruiting nominees for membership on the Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Board to fill vacancies on the board.

The Council is mandated by Section 18, Article 10L of the West Virginia Code to maintain a standing committee to serve as the consumer board to direct the Division of Rehabilitation Services in the implementation of this program. The Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Program is a service provided through the State Plan for Independent Living, developed and implemented jointly with the Division of Rehabilitation Services.

Legislatively, the board is required to meet at least quarterly, but usually meets monthly to review applications for eligibility and to address policy and other governing issues for the program. Board members will be compensated for allowable expenses incurred as a result of active participation on the board.

You may wish to nominate yourself or another person (with their permission) for membership on this board. Individuals nominated must have a severe disability (a physical, mental, or sensory impairment that affects one or more major life activities), be dedicated to the development and growth of the Ron Yost Personal Assistance Services Program, and committed to attending meetings.

If you or someone you know would like to be considered for board membership, download the RYPAS Board Nomination Form at <http://www.wvsilc.org/docs/RYPAS%20Board%20Nomination%20Form.pdf>.

Submit the completed form to:

WVSILC
PO Box 625
Institute, WV 25112
Fax: (304) 766-4721
Email: wvsilc@wvsilc.org

If you need further information or assistance, please contact our office at (304) 766-4624.



National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Source: [Office of Disability Employment Policy](#)

In October, we celebrate the National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) and recognize the often overlooked talents that people with disabilities bring to the workforce.

This is a year of milestone anniversaries for the disability community as we celebrate 30 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act and 75 years of NDEAM. This year's NDEAM theme, "increasing access and opportunity," reflects the impact of these two milestones.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy offers a range of resources to help employers and organizations plan NDEAM observances, including a poster; social media content; activity ideas for each day of the month; and sample articles, press release, and proclamation.

We hope you will take advantage of these resources and join us in celebrating the importance of competitive, integrated employment in the lives of people with disabilities.

Visit the Office of Disability Employment Policy to learn more at: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/initiatives/ndeam>. ■



WV Absentee Voting Information

Source: GoVoteWV.com



In West Virginia, certain registered voters may receive and vote an absentee ballot by mail. This page provides information regarding absentee voting eligibility, process and required forms.

Eligibility and Absentee Voting Information

Voters may submit an absentee ballot application beginning January 1 for the upcoming May Primary Election, and beginning

on the 84th day before the General Election.

The absentee ballot application must be received in your county clerk's office by the 6th day before each election. Applications may be submitted to your county clerk via fax, U.S. mail, email, or in-person by hand delivery.

A complete list of the eligibility requirements and information relating to the different forms and qualifications for absentee voting in West Virginia may be viewed at the following link: [Eligibility For Absentee Voting in West Virginia](#).

Voting an Absentee Ballot

County Clerks begin mailing ballots on the 46th day before the election. For instructions on how to vote an absentee ballot, please select one of the links below:

[Instructions for Voting a Paper Ballot by Mail](#)

[Instructions for Voting an Optical Scan Ballot by Mail](#)

[Electronic Absentee for Voters with Physical Disabilities](#)

Returning an Absentee Ballot

After receiving an absentee ballot, the voter may simply vote and return the ballot to the County Clerk in the appropriate envelopes as soon as possible (or by hand delivery at the Clerk's office).

If your first time voting will be absentee by mail, you must send a copy of one of the forms of valid ID listed below with your ballot.

Valid ID for first time voters must show your current name and address in order to be accepted:

- Valid photo identification
- Utility bill
- Bank statement
- Government check
- Paycheck
- Any other official government document

Unless a voter is a military or overseas voter, the ballot must be mailed and postmarked by Election Day and received by the start of Canvass.

For hand-delivery, absentee ballots must be delivered to the County Clerk's office by the day before Election Day. Although voters do not have to personally

KCSO Participates in Disability Training

Source: [WOWKTV](#)

KANAWHA COUNTY, WV (WOWK) — According to The Ruderman Family Foundation, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are much more likely to have encounters with police and first responders, yet are also more likely to have communication difficulties that can lead to misunderstandings.

On Wednesday, deputies with the Kanawha County Sheriff's Office participated in training designed to help bridge that communication gap.

It's all part of the National Down Syndrome Society's national disability training initiative. Wednesday's day long training was presented by Putnam County resident, Steve Slack.

"I have three kids, my oldest daughter, Sophie, has down syndrome. And I have twin boys, and one of sons, Samuel, has autism. So I do it for them," explained Slack.

Slack was awarded the "Champion of Change" award from the NDSS in 2018. He's traveled across the country presenting trainings and seminars to local law enforcement agencies from the Mountain State, to New York, and Pennsylvania.

"According to the Ruderman family foundation, 50 % of people killed in police encounters has some sort of developmental, intellectual, or mental disability. Our goal, we want to lower that statistic," added Slack.

Kanawha County Sheriff Mike Rutherford said he's thankful his deputies are getting new tools and resources to help them better communicate with the people they serve.

"At the end of the day, our goal is to protect everyone. Better communication is vital to ensuring we keep everyone safe." ■



"I WOULDN'T BE TARDY IF THE SCHOOL HAD WHEELCHAIR ACCESS."

(Voting continued from p8)

For hand-delivery, absentee ballots must be delivered to the [County Clerk's](#) office by the day before Election Day. Although voters do not have to personally return his or her absentee ballot, no one person may deliver more than two voters' absentee ballots.

Voters Covered under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)

Voters covered under UOCAVA may register to vote, request and return an absentee ballot for certain elections held within West Virginia. UOCAVA voters may submit their absentee application beginning January 1 of the election year.

To see whether you qualify to vote absentee under UOCAVA, please visit the following page: [Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act \(UOCAVA\)](#)

If you are eligible as a UOCAVA voter, you may both register to vote and apply for an absentee ballot by filling out and submitting the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). If you are registering to vote for the first time, your FPCA must be submitted via U.S. mail no later than 21-days before election day. If you are already registered to vote, you may submit your FPCA to your county clerk via email, fax, or U.S. mail.

You may return your absentee ballot in the same manner it was transmitted based on your choice marked on the FPCA, or via U.S. Mail. Your absentee ballot must be received by your county clerk by the start of Canvass, which begins in most counties five (5) days after Election Day.

Tracking an Absentee Ballot

Absentee voters may conveniently track the status of their absentee ballots by entering the requested information at the following link: [Absentee Ballot Tracking](#). ■





Pumpkin Spice French Toast Latte

Source: www.silk.com

Take your PSL to the next level with this delicious spin on a fan favorite!

Prep Time	Servings
12 Min	1

Ingredients

- 1 TBSP Vegan Butter, Browned
- 1/3 Cup Silk Pumpkin Spice Almond Creamer
- 1 TSP Maple Syrup
- 1 TSP Brown Sugar
- 1/2 TSP Vanilla Extract
- Pinch of Cinnamon
- 1 TBSP Nutritional Yeast
- 1/2 Cup of Coffee or 1-2 Espresso Shots
- Additional Cinnamon or Nutmeg, (for serving)

Preparation

1. Melt vegan butter in a small saucepan over medium heat. Continue to cook until butter turns light golden brown and smells like buttered popcorn, about 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat and transfer to a small bowl.
2. Whisk together Silk Pumpkin Spice Almond Creamer, browned vegan butter, maple syrup, brown sugar, vanilla, and cinnamon in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer over medium heat.
3. Pour hot coffee into a warmed mug. Remove pan from heat; add Silk mixture to coffee, stir and garnish with a pinch of cinnamon or nutmeg.

Trump Administration Announces \$20 Billion in New Phase 3 Provider Relief Funding

Source: [HHS.gov](https://www.hhs.gov)

Today [October 1], under the leadership of President Trump, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), is announcing \$20 billion in new funding for providers on the frontlines of the coronavirus pandemic. Under this Phase 3 General Distribution allocation, providers that have already received Provider Relief Fund payments will be invited to apply for additional funding that considers financial losses and changes in operating expenses caused by the coronavirus. Previously ineligible providers, such as those who began practicing in 2020 will also be invited to apply, and an expanded group of behavioral health providers confronting the emergence of increased mental health and substance use issues exacerbated by the pandemic will also be eligible for relief payments.

Providers can begin applying for funds on Monday, October 5, 2020.

“HHS has worked to ensure that all American healthcare providers receive support from the Provider Relief Fund in a fast and fair way, and this new round helps ensure that we are reaching America’s essential behavioral health providers and takes into account losses and expenses relating to coronavirus,” said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. “We’ve worked with all of the resources we have across HHS to ensure that America’s heroic healthcare providers know they can apply for support.”

HHS has already issued over \$100 billion in relief funding to providers through prior distributions. Still, HHS recognizes that many providers continue to struggle financially from COVID-19’s impact. For eligible providers, the new Phase 3 General Distribution is designed to balance an equitable payment of 2 percent of annual revenue from patient care for all applicants plus an add-on payment to account for revenue losses and expenses attributable to COVID-19.

Further, HHS recognizes constraints such as the stay-at-home orders and social isolation have been particularly difficult for many Americans. A recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [report](#) found the prevalence of symptoms of anxiety disorder in the second quarter of 2020 was approximately three times those that reported in the second quarter of 2019 (25.5% versus 8.1%); and the prevalence of depressive disorder was approximately four times that reported in the second quarter of 2019 (24.3% versus 6.5%). Our behavioral health providers have shouldered the burden of responding and confronting this expanded challenge triggered by the pandemic. When traditional face-to-face counseling was restricted and new telehealth flexibilities were put in place in response to the pandemic, many behavioral health providers invested in and [adopted - PDF](#) telehealth technologies to continue providing patient care. While some Medicare or Medicaid behavioral health providers have already received prior General Distribution payments, others have not. Working with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), HRSA developed a list of the nation’s behavioral health providers now eligible for funding, which includes, for example, addiction counseling centers, mental health

(See Funding p11)

(Funding continued from p10)

counselors, and psychiatrists.

Eligibility

HHS is making a large number of providers eligible for Phase 3 General Distribution funding, including:

- Providers who previously received, rejected or accepted a General Distribution Provider Relief Fund payment. Providers that have already received payments of approximately 2% of annual revenue from patient care may submit more information to become eligible for an additional payment.
- Behavioral Health providers, including those that previously received funding and new providers.
- Healthcare providers that began practicing January 1, 2020 through March 31, 2020. This includes Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, dentists, assisted living facilities and behavioral health providers.

Payment Methodology – Apply Early

All eligible providers will be considered for payment against the below criteria.

All provider submissions will be reviewed to confirm they have received a Provider Relief Fund payment equal to approximately 2 percent of patient care revenue from prior general distributions. Applicants that have not yet received Relief Fund payments of 2 percent of patient revenue will receive a payment that, when combined with prior payments (if any), equals 2 percent of patient care revenue.

With the remaining balance of the \$20 billion budget, HRSA will then calculate an equitable add-on payment that considers the following:

- A provider's change in operating revenues from patient care
- A provider's change in operating expenses from patient care, including expenses incurred related to coronavirus
- Payments already received through prior Provider Relief Fund distributions.

We know providers want to receive payments shortly after submitting their information. However, this distribution requires cooperation on the part of all applicants. Again, HHS is urging all eligible providers to apply early; do not wait until the last day or week of the application period. Applying early will help to expedite HHS's review process and payment calculations, and ultimately accelerate the distribution of all payments.

All payment recipients will be required to attest to receiving the Phase 3 General Distribution payment and accept the associated Terms and Conditions.

Application Deadline

Providers will have from October 5, 2020 through November 6, 2020 to apply for Phase 3 General Distribution funding. HHS's top priority is ensuring as many providers possible have an opportunity to apply. HHS will continue to host webinars to assist providers through the application process and the call center is also available to address questions.

HHS recognizes the multifaceted challenges of this pandemic cannot be won without frontline healthcare providers focused on containing the virus and delivering holistic care. Funding for this Phase 3 General Distribution was made possible through the bipartisan CARES Act and the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act, which allocated \$175

(See Funding next column)



Making WVABLE Work for You! Webinar Series Oct. 6, 2020 - Dec. 8, 2020

Source: [WVABLE](#)

In partnership with Disability Rights of WV, WVABLE is excited to announce this FREE webinar series offering an array of short financial workshops where attendees will learn more about WVABLE – a tax free savings program that allows many individuals with disabilities to save and invest without being at risk for losing needs based benefits like SSI and Medicaid. Join us each Tuesday for a lunch and learn from noon to 1 p.m.

Topics include

- What is WVABLE?
- Ease of enrollment and using the STABLE reloadable debit card
- Importance of budgeting and savings
- Benefits of employment for the SSI recipient
- Employment for all
- Preparing for the future and Special Needs Trust
- Luke Stone IllumiNATION Fund
- Panel discussion

Learn more and register for free at: <https://www.wvsto.com/Savings-Programs/WVABLE/Conference> ■

(Funding continued from previous column)

billion in relief funds to hospitals and other healthcare providers.

For updates and to learn more about the Provider Relief Program, visit: hhs.gov/providerrelief. ■

WVSILC MEETINGS 2021

October 7, 2020 Full Council Meeting
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Via Zoom

November 4, 2020 Executive Committee
1:00 p.m. Via Zoom

December 2, 2020 Full Council Meeting
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Via Zoom

January 6, 2021 Executive Committee
1:00 PM, SILC Office or Zoom

February 3, 2021 Full Council Meeting
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Location to be determined

March 3, 2021 Executive Committee
1:00 PM, SILC Office or Zoom

April 7, 2021 Full Council Meeting
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Location to be determined

May 5, 2021 Executive Committee
1:00 PM, SILC Office or Zoom

June 2, 2021 Full Council Meeting
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Location to be determined

July 7, 2021, 2021 Executive Committee
1:00 PM, SILC Office or Zoom

August 4, 2021 Full Council Meeting
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Location to be determined

September 1, 2021 Executive Committee
1:00 PM, SILC Office or Zoom



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