




ACCESS TO INDEPENDENCE

JULY 2024 NEWSLETTER



Upcoming Events



In observance of Independence Day, the offices at Access to Independence will be closed July 4th. We wish you and your families and safe and happy Fourth of July. We will reopen on July 5th during regular business hours.



Hawaii Branch

Check back next month for upcoming events! Support Groups will resume in August.

Upcoming Events

Escondido Branch

Event #1: Disability Support Group

Description: Our disability support group aims to provide a platform for people living with disabilities to engage around different topics related to coping, overcoming hurdles, and sharing both positive and negative experiences. We invite our consumers to engage with us in a non-judgmental virtual atmosphere to enjoy a meaningful interaction with a diverse group of individuals!

Date: 7/26/2024 (Every Last Friday of the Month)

Time: 12:30 PM - 3 PM

Location: 2235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Vivian Radam, ILSC, 619-704-2435, vradam@accessto independence.org

Event #2: Voting Advocacy

Description: Come and get information on voting registration, ensure your voting location is fully accessible, and learn about absentee ballot procedures and more!

Date: 7/18/2024 (Every Third Thursday of the Month)

Time: 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Location: 235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Michaela Jackson, Information & Assistance Coordinator, 619-704-2440 Ext 101, mjackson@accessto independence.org

Event #3: Transition & Diversion Program

Description: Are you ready to transition out of a residential medical institution into your own independent home? This program is for you! Let Access to Independence advocate beside you in order to transition into your community successfully!

Date: Call us today to schedule an appointment!

Location: 2235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Valerie Jex, 619-704-2434, vjex@accessto independence.org

Event #4: Benefits Options Counseling Program

Description: This program helps individuals learn about what benefits they are eligible for and navigate the application or appeals process including: Social Security, CalFresh, caregiving services, transportation services, healthcare applications, discounted utilities, and more!

Date: Call us today to schedule an appointment!

Location: 235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Vivian Radam, ILSC, 619-704-2435, vradam@accessto independence.org

Upcoming Events

San Diego Branch

Event #1: Disability Support Group

Description: Our disability support group aims to provide a platform for people living with disabilities to engage around different topics related to coping, overcoming hurdles, and sharing both positive and negative experiences. We invite our consumers to engage with us in a non-judgmental virtual atmosphere to enjoy a meaningful interaction with a diverse group of individuals!

Date: 7/26/2024 (Every Last Friday of the Month)

Time: 12:30 PM - 3 PM

Location: 2235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Vivian Radam, ILSC, 619-704-2435, vradam@accesstoindpendence.org

Event #2: Voting Advocacy

Description: Come and get information on voting registration, ensure your voting location is fully accessible, and learn about absentee ballot procedures and more!

Date: 7/18/2024 (Every Third Thursday of the Month)

Time: 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Location: 2235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Andrea Christopher, LTSS Coordinator, 619-704-2442, achrsitopher@accesstoindpendence.org

Event #3: Transition & Diversion Program

Description: Are you ready to transition out of a residential medical institution into your own independent home? This program is for you! Let Access to Independence advocate beside you in order to transition into your community successfully!

Date: Call us today to schedule an appointment!

Location: 2235 W. 5th Ave. Ste 110, Escondido, CA 92025

Contact: Valerie Jex, 619-704-2434, vjex@accesstoindpendence.org

Event #4: Benefits Options Counseling Program

Description: This program helps individuals learn about what benefits they are eligible for and navigate the application or appeals process including: Social Security, CalFresh, caregiving services, transportation services, healthcare applications, discounted utilities, and more!

Date: Call us today to schedule an appointment!

Location: 8885 Rio San Diego Dr. Ste 100, San Diego, CA 92108

Contact: Andrea Christopher, LTSS Coordinator, 619-704-2442, achrsitopher@accesstoindpendence.org

Upcoming Events

Imperial Valley Branch

Event #1: Enhanced Vision Program

Description: Access to Independence offers a program exclusively for individuals who are 55 years old or older, with Vision Loss or Blindness.

Date: 07/09/2024

Location: Imperial Gardens. 2385 Myrtle Rd. Imperial, CA 92251

Contact: Susana Garcia, LTSS Coordinator, 760-965-4199, sgarcia@accesstoindependence.org

Event 2: Enhanced Vision Program

Description: Access to Independence offers a program exclusively for individuals who are 55 years old or older, with Vision Loss or Blindness.

Date: 07/10/2024

Location: Holtville Gardens. 950 Holt. Ave. Holtville, CA 92250

Contact: Susana Garcia, LTSS Coordinator, 760-965-4199, sgarcia@accesstoindependence.org

Event 3: Youth Transition Program

Description: Are you ready to transition out of a residential medical institution into your own independent home? This program is for you! Let Access to Independence advocate beside you in order to transition into your community successfully!

Date: Call us today to schedule!

Location: 321 Wake Ave. El Centro, 92243

Contact: Judith Brown, Transition & Diversion Coordinator, jbrown@accesstoindependence.org

Event 4: Transition & Diversion Outreach

Description: Join us as we present on the services offered through the Transition and Diversion programs available at Access to Independence.

Date: 7/17/2024

Time: 10 AM-11 AM

Location: 321 Wake Ave. El Centro, 92243

Contact: Judith Brown, Transition & Diversion Coordinator, 760-618-0167, jbrown@accesstoindependence.org

Event 5: Employment Skills Workshop

Description: Access to Independence welcomes all youth between the ages 14-24 who have a disability to join us for an Employment Skills Workshop. Learn more about employment, skills, resume building, interview preparedness and more!

Date: 7/29/2024

Time: 10 AM-11 AM

Location: 321 Wake Ave. El Centro, 92243

Contact: Edgar Lopez, Youth Transition Coordinator, 760-890-4651 elopez@accesstoindependence.org

American Disabilities Act turns 34



34 years ago on July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law. This historic civil rights law protects the rights of people with disabilities.

Thanks to the ADA

Access to Independence is proud to support the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 34th Anniversary. On July 26th we celebrate this important civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public.

The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.





CROSS-DISABILITY SUPPORT GROUP HAWAII OFFICE

CROSS DISABILITY SUPPORT GROUP

Our monthly Cross-Disability Support Group welcomes all ages and backgrounds. We focus on emotional support, social connection, and meaningful relationships. Enjoy heartfelt discussions, activities promoting well-being, and guest speakers. Join us to connect, share, and celebrate our diverse experiences.

For more information, contact us at:

Leelynn Brady
Program Manager
(808) 369-9524

On June 26th, our Cross-Disabilities Peer Support Group had the privilege of hosting a Voter Education Presentation by the Office of Elections. This informative session provided valuable insights into accessible voting options and emphasized the significance of voting as our civic duty. Participants left with a deeper understanding of how to engage in the electoral process effectively.



Image text: two men standing in front of screen presenting on Voter Education.



Find out about information you need to renew or apply for Medi-Cal.

Your local Medi-Cal office will attempt to verify the information you provide. If they are unable to verify your information, they will contact you to provide any needed information.

IMPORTANT:

Your local Medi-Cal office will let you know if you need to provide proof of citizenship or immigration status.

This information is used only to see if you qualify for health coverage.

If the local Medi-Cal office asks for identity verification, below are examples of information you may provide electronically or in paper form:

- Copy of driver's license or photo ID
- Social Security Number (physical card)
- Copy of immigration documentation or card (used to verify identity; legal citizenship status is not required)

CALIFORNIA RESIDENCY

Proof of residency is not required. You only need to tell the county that you live in California:

- When you first apply
- If you move

You can tell the county by listing the address where you live and/or receive mail on your application or renewal form or by calling the county office with your address if you move.

INCOME AND DEDUCTIONS

Your local Medi-Cal office will let you know if you need to submit proof of income and deductions. Income is money you get from a job, self-employment, or other sources, such as Social Security or pension. Examples include:

- Income from your job, including wages, tips, salaries, and bonuses from employers
- Income from self-employment
 - Uber/Lyft drivers
 - Food delivery
 - Cleaning services

Continued

— Child care

- Social Security retirement, survivors, and disability benefits
- Unemployment benefits

Examples of information to verify income if you are employed:

- A copy of your most recent pay stub showing: gross income (total amount of money you earn before taxes), pay period, date received, and hours worked
- A copy of your most recent 1040 tax form, showing annual income information
- A statement from your employer about income received

Examples of proof of income if you are self-employed:

- A copy of Schedule C of your most recent tax return
- A profit and loss statement for the last three months

Examples of proof of income if you get Social Security or veteran's benefits:

- A copy of paid benefits stub or award letter

Examples of proof of income if you get unemployment or disability benefits:

- A copy of paid benefits stubs
- A letter that shows what you earned before deductions

DEDUCTIONS

Deductions that you pay may lower the income Medi-Cal uses to determine your eligibility. If you pay for childcare, child support, alimony, or health insurance, you may provide copies of checks or receipts.

SELF-ATTESTATION

If you do not have the information requested you may self-attest. Self-attestation is a signed written or verbal statement. It can be used in place of requested verification documents. Contact your local Medi-Cal office if you need help with self-attestation.



Help is available. If you have questions about your Medi-Cal eligibility renewal or would like in-person assistance, visit

[Medi-Cal.dhcs.ca.gov](https://www.Medi-Cal.dhcs.ca.gov)

to learn more.



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WE'RE HIRING

Are you ready to be part of something extraordinary? We are thrilled to announce that our wonderful organization is expanding, and we are on the lookout for passionate individuals to join our dynamic team!

Now Hiring:

1. **Long-Term Services and Supports Coordinator (Location: Hawaii)**
2. **Information and Assistance Coordinator (Location: Hawaii)**
3. **Youth Coordinator (Location: Hawaii)**
4. **Community Organizing Coordinator (Location: Imperial Valley)**

Why Join Us? At Access to Independence, we take pride in fostering a positive and collaborative work environment. Our team is not just colleagues; we are a family that supports and uplifts one another. By joining us, you'll become an integral part of an organization dedicated to making a meaningful impact on the lives of those we serve.

Benefits:

- Competitive salary
- Comprehensive health and wellness benefits
- Opportunities for professional development
- A supportive and inclusive workplace culture
- The chance to contribute to impactful programs and initiatives

How to Apply: Ready to take the next step in your career? You can apply for these exciting opportunities in two simple ways:

- Visit our Indeed job postings.
- Email your resume to jobs@accesstoindependence.org.

Don't miss the chance to be part of our incredible journey! We encourage candidates from diverse backgrounds to apply. Help us continue making a difference in the communities we serve.

If you have any questions or need further information, please feel free to reach out to us at accessmedia@accesstoindependence.org

Join us in shaping a brighter future! We look forward to welcoming new members to our fantastic team.



CUT COSTS ON YOUR SUMMER ENERGY BILL

Warmer temps are on their way, but it doesn't have to mean higher energy bills. Use major appliances when energy is less expensive, before 4 p.m. or after 9 p.m. Here are ways to save energy and money while staying cool.

First, let's talk about appliances. They tend to use a lot of energy and heat up your home at the same time. With that in mind, consider the following:

1. **Change the way you cook:** Turn off the oven and stovetop as much as possible. Relying on microwaves, slow cookers, backyard grills or air fryers are great ways to heat up your food but not your home. If you're going to use your oven, do it sparingly and during the coolest part of the day.
2. **Change how you wash your clothes:** Use cold water to wash your clothes so you don't have to pay to heat the water. Cold water helps reduce wrinkles and remove stains. Washing in cold also helps your clothes last longer, prolong vibrancy and maintain their shape and size. Always aim for full loads of laundry and consider line drying them.
3. **Don't "heat dry" your dishes:** When running your dishwasher, turn off the "heat dry" cycle and let dishes air dry instead.
4. **Use smart plugs for appliances:** Smart plugs allow you to schedule when your appliances are on or off – even remotely. They also help reduce "vampire draw" since appliances still use energy when they're off but still plugged in.

Beyond appliances, here are other great ways to save on energy use:

1. **Save with Golden State rebates:** Receive rebates toward the purchase of energy-efficient products like smart thermostats, heat pump water heaters and room air conditioners. Get details at sdge.com/rebates and for the product list, visit GoldenStateRebates.com.
2. **Use ceiling fans instead of the A/C:** Ceiling fans can save up to 25 percent on cooling costs and reduces your home's temperature up to ten degrees. In warmer temps, fans should be set counter-clockwise for the best cooling effect. Don't forget to change the direction to clockwise when temps drop in cooler months because the fan pushes heat down.
3. **Use occupancy sensors:** Install occupancy sensors for your lights. These sensors automatically turn off lights when there's no movement in a room. [You can also opt for dimmer switches with occupancy sensors to adjust lighting levels based on need.](#)
4. **Cook efficiently:** Use lids on pots and pans while cooking to retain heat. Match the pot size to the burner to avoid energy waste.

For more ideas on how to save energy, visit sdge.com/MyEnergy.