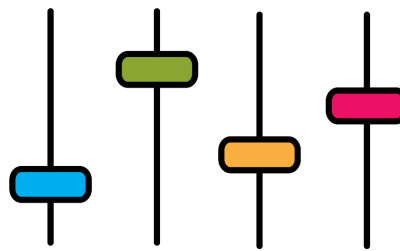


>> SLIDE 1

LEVEL

UP



BUILDING TOMORROW TOGETHER



**2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
ON INDEPENDENT LIVING**

2025 Annual Conference on Independent Living

LEVEL UP: Building Tomorrow Together

Presented by the National Council on Independent Living

>> SLIDE 2

Leveraging Additional Funding and Support

Leveling Up Sustainability / July 23, 2025

Rebecca Salon

Nancy Boutot

LEADCenter

National Center on Leadership for the Employment
and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities

>> SLIDE 3: Presenters



- Rebecca Salon, Senior Advisor, LEAD Center, National Disability Institute
- Nancy Boutot, Financial Empowerment Subject Matter Expert, LEAD Center, National Disability Institute

>> SLIDE 4: Learning Objectives (1)

In this session, participants will:

- Explore opportunities for blending, braiding, and sequencing funding and resources that can assist Centers for Independent Living (CILs) in expanding their services and supports, and engaging in resource mapping.

>> SLIDE 5: Learning Objectives (2)

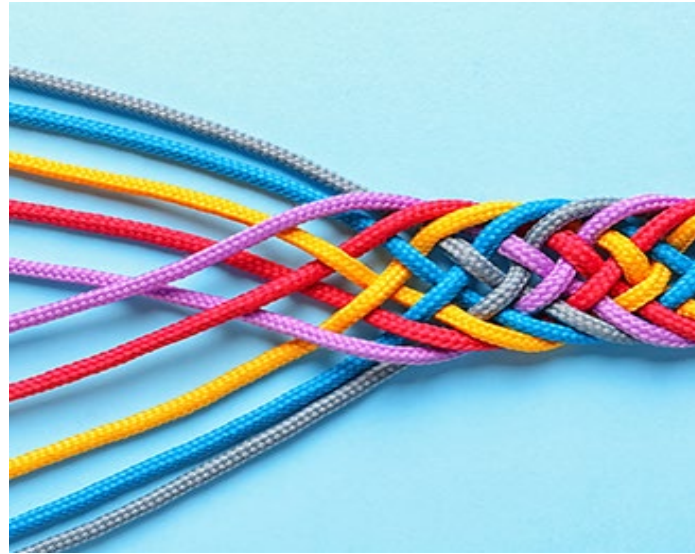
- Learn about opportunities to build and cultivate strategic partnerships to leverage resources from different programs to support employment and independent living outcomes.
- Gain access to extensive free resources to support their work in assisting their members in gaining and maintaining employment, supporting independent living, and increasing their financial stability.

Partnerships for Blending,
Braiding, and Sequencing (BBS)
Resources and Services

>> SLIDE 7: Multiple funding streams may be:



1. **Blended:** combine dollars to create a single “pot” of dollars to purchase services for customers.



2. **Braided:** separately and *simultaneously*, purchase and provide specific services for customers.



3. **Sequenced:** separately and *sequentially* purchase and provide specific services for customers.

>> SLIDE 8: Resource Leveraging & Service Coordination to Increase Employment Outcomes

With support from the LEAD Center, nine federal agencies issued a joint communication encouraging states to leverage resources and coordinate services from multiple systems to increase employment for people with disabilities.

Specifically, they encouraged state and local partners to proactively implement resource blending, braiding, and sequencing across systems to improve employment outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities.

>> SLIDE 9: Sequencing

- Multiple funders separately but sequentially provide services:
 - Requires interagency coordination and collaboration to ensure no gaps in services for jobseekers.
 - Unlike braiding, jobseekers leave one service to connect to the next service.
 - Often requires creation of clear agreements in writing between agencies to define the services provided.

>> SLIDE 10: Braided Funding and Resources

- Multiple funders separately and simultaneously provide resources/services:
 - Requires interagency coordination and collaboration.
 - Funders must coordinate services to ensure non-duplication.
 - Emphasizes cost-sharing rather than cost-shifting.
 - Facilitates great opportunity for co-enrollment.
 - Focuses on division of payment responsibility—defining what each funder can provide in the short- and long-term.
 - When multiple funders can pay for the same thing, there must be clear agreement in writing on who will pay when.

>> SLIDE 11: Blending

- Multiple funding streams combining into one pot of funding:
 - Funding from each program loses its program-specific identity.
 - Requires explicit regulatory or statutory authorization.
 - Requires a formal agreement between funders that aligns with regulatory or statutory authority.

>> SLIDE 12: Ideal Partnerships for Blending, Braiding, and Sequencing

- WIOA Title I, II, III & IV Services
- Medicaid Services
- Developmental Disabilities Agency
- Mental Health/Behavioral Health Agency
- State Offices for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind, Blind &/or other disability-related offices
- Employment Networks through the Ticket to Work Program
- Career and Technical Education
- Schools and State Education Agencies

>> SLIDE 13: Why be strategic?

- Strategic partnering creates value and brings expertise from every organization.
- CILs have unique and robust knowledge that can be leveraged to provide guidance and bring expertise in many arenas.
- Utilizing partnerships opens doors for collaboration, which increases opportunities for jobseekers.
- Leveraging your knowledge and understanding creates connections that benefit everyone involved.

>> SLIDE 14: Enhancing workforce partnerships (1)

- Become knowledgeable with how American Job Centers, vocational rehabilitation, and others talk about partnerships and people with disabilities in your WIOA state and local plans, including agreements, and ensure staff/others are informed.
- Stretch beyond just being a referral source or presence. Offer training, share resources, attend meetings.

>> SLIDE 15: Enhancing workforce partnerships (2)

- Leverage WIOA to open doors to career pathways, technology and artificial intelligence (AI) use; financial planning; funding opportunities, including those utilizing blending, braiding, and sequencing.

Resource Mapping

>> SLIDE 17: What is resource mapping?

Resource mapping is a strategy to help individuals and organizations access and leverage resources available in their community. Resource mapping:

- Enhances cross-agency collaboration between organizations working towards the same goal of employment and economic self-sufficiency for customers.
- Expands referrals between organizations that can assist an individual in achieving their goals.
- Identifies the services/supports various organizations provide
- Creates an opportunity for soft referrals (vs. hard referrals)

>> SLIDE 18: Soft Referral versus Hard Referral

- Soft referral (soft hand off) – a referral to another organization in which a counselor, case manager, employment specialist or other staff member has a contact to open a door for an individual.
- Hard referral (cold call) – a referral to another organization in which the counselor, case manager, employment specialist or other staff member has no contact with or relationship when referring an individual.

>> SLIDE 19: The Importance of Resource Mapping

- Important strategy for integrating services.
- Provides an opportunity for the blending, braiding and/or sequencing resources amongst a variety of organizations.
- Assists in identifying the gaps within the community needed to assist individuals in finding employment and/or building their financial well-being.

>> SLIDE 20: Five Key Strategies to Financial Stability



>> SLIDE 21: Step 1 - chart

Identify resources and tools for each of the following strategies.

Public Benefits and Work Supports	Employment	Free Tax Preparation and EITC	Financial Education and Financial Coaching	Asset Development

>> SLIDE 22: Step 1 – chart with examples

Identify resources and tools for each of the following strategies.

Public Benefits and Work Supports	Employment	Free Tax Preparation and EITC	Financial Education and Financial Coaching	Asset Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SSI• SSDI• SNAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• American Job Centers• Vocational Rehabilitation• Behavioral/ Mental Health• Developmental Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• VITA• IRS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FDIC Money Smart• CFPB• University Extension• Banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ABLE Accounts• Home ownership

>> SLIDE 23: Step 2 - chart

Identify the resources and tools for each strategy that are currently offered by your organization.

Public Benefits and Work Supports	Employment	Free Tax Preparation and EITC	Financial Education and Financial Coaching	Asset Development

>> SLIDE 24: Step 2 – chart with example

Identify the resources and tools for each strategy that are currently offered by your organization.

Public Benefits and Work Supports	Employment	Free Tax Preparation and EITC	Financial Education and Financial Coaching	Asset Development
Example: Benefits Counseling	Example: Resume writing		Local Bank or Financial Institution	Home Ownership

>> SLIDE 25: Step 3 - chart

Identify providers in your community that support each strategy.

Public Benefits and Work Supports	Employment	Free Tax Preparation and EITC	Financial Education and Financial Coaching	Asset Development

>> SLIDE 26: Step 3 – chart with example

Identify providers in your community that support each strategy.

Public Benefits and Work Supports	Employment	Free Tax Preparation and EITC	Financial Education and Financial Coaching	Asset Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Example: Service Source – Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) services		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Example: United Way		

>> SLIDE 27: Final Step

- Analyze the gaps and create a strategy to learn more about those organizations you may not be familiar with.
- Engage partners if appropriate.

>> SLIDE 28: Resource Mapping Tips

- It is important to do the resource mapping activity with your colleagues and/or other allies/partners. This will provide diverse responses and identify other resources you may not be familiar with.
- Resource mapping takes time and is a work in progress as you build new relationships
- Creating new relationships is key and allows for soft referrals and the blending, braiding and sequencing of resources.

>> SLIDE 29: Financial Empowerment (1)

We all navigate the same financial system.

However, many individuals with a disability face an additional layer of complexity as they make financial decisions and use financial products.

>> SLIDE 30: Financial Empowerment (2)

Among the factors contributing to that complexity are:

- Navigating public benefits.
- Limits to an individual's ability to build assets and save towards goals.
- The need to receive financial and health supports.
- The planning and preparation needed to move from SSA cash benefits to earned income from working.
- The lack of access to resources and information needed to make informed decisions.

>> SLIDE 31: Financial Toolkit for Individuals with Disabilities



Preparing for a Job
Starting a Job
Maintaining a Job
Changing or Losing a Job
Retiring from a Job
Search the Toolkit

If you are looking to secure your financial future, you are not alone.

As the job market changes, many people — including people with disabilities — will be making employment-related decisions based on their new financial situation. You may be one of them.

The financial toolkit is an up-to-date repository of financial literacy tools and resources beneficial to all Americans, including individuals from historically underserved populations, striving to achieve financial stability. We all need clear and accurate information to secure our financial well-being.

The toolkit provides a path forward based on where you are in your employment journey. Choose any of the topic areas below — [Preparing for a Job](#), [Starting a Job](#), [Maintaining a Job](#), [Changing or Losing a Job](#), and [Retiring from a Job](#) — for answers to important questions, including tools and resources to help you meet your financial goals.

>> SLIDE 32: Financial Toolkit

Secure Your Financial Future: A Toolkit for Individuals with Disabilities



Preparing
for a Job



Starting
a Job



Maintaining
a Job



Changing or
Losing a Job



Retiring
from a Job

>> SLIDE 33: Resources

- [Secure Your Financial Future: A Toolkit for Individuals with Disabilities](#)
 - Just click on any topic — [Preparing for a Job](#), [Starting a Job](#), [Maintaining a Job](#), [Changing or Losing a Job](#), and [Retiring from a Job](#) — for answers to important questions, including tools and resources to help you meet your financial goals.
- [Aligning Employment and Financial Conversations in American Job Centers](#)
- [Aligning My Career Path with My Earning Needs](#)
- [LEAD Center website](#): Sign up for information and notifications

>> SLIDE 34: More Resources

[National Disability Institute](#) – Financial education handouts, quick reference guides and resources in English and Spanish


[FDIC Money Smart](#) – Financial education programs/resources for kids, young people, young adults, adults, older adults, and small business.

[Your Money Your Goals](#) - a set of financial empowerment materials for organizations that help people meet their financial goals by increasing their knowledge, skills, and resources.

[Disability Companion Guide](#) for Your Money Your Goals - Tips, information, tools, and skill-building resources for people with disabilities and for organizations that serve the disability community.

>> SLIDE 35: LEAD Center State Specific Policies and Data

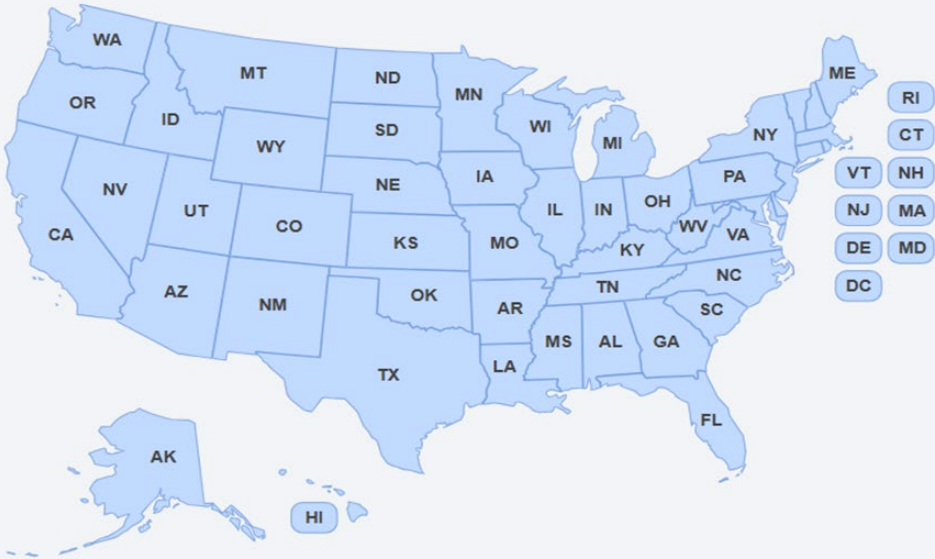
- [Explore](#) state-specific policies, initiatives, and services to better understand how your state supports opportunity and participation for people with disabilities.
- With easy navigation, you can select any state to explore its unique approach to policies and data.



State Specific Policies and Data

Every state sets a course to ensure that workplace systems provide equal opportunity and full participation for those with disabilities.

In this section, find links to labor, health, vocational rehabilitation (VR) and other agencies for each state, along with relevant policies, initiatives, and services. Select a state to learn about their policies and initiatives.



Select a State to Begin ▼

>> SLIDE 36: LEAD Center Website

LEADCenter

National Center on Leadership for the Employment
and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities

<http://leadcenter.org/>

Sign up for information and notifications.

>> SLIDE 37: Connect with us

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X: <https://twitter.com/LEADCtr>



LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/company/odep-lead-center/>



YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/LEADCtr>

>> SLIDE 38

Questions?