

HOME LIVING

Independent Living Services

Definition

The goal of Independent Living Services is to assist and teach adults to live independently in their own homes in the community, or to increase independence while living in the home of a family member or caregiver.

Independent Living Services offer functional skills training and supports in all or some of the following areas: cooking; cleaning; shopping; menu planning; meal preparation; money management; use of public transportation; personal health and hygiene; self-advocacy; independent recreation; participation in natural environments; use of medical, dental and other community health resources; use of police, fire, or other emergency help; and home and community safety. Independent living services are conducted in natural environments, rather than in a center-based environment. This type of service does not involve care and supervision, nor large blocks of time in giving support and assistance. Activities are not simulated, but are conducted as part of everyday life while participating and establishing meaningful relationships in one's own community.

Policy

It is the policy of Westside Regional Center to provide independent living services to those adults who express the interest and desire to live in their own homes and to provide individuals with training to do so without jeopardizing their health and safety.

These services may also be offered to adults who still live in the home of a family member. In these cases, the service may be designed to prepare the adult to move to an independent living setting, or to assist the adult to obtain more independence while still living in the current environment.

Independent living services may be offered in conjunction with other services and activities. For example, an individual may attend a community college or participate in a work training or supported employment program while receiving this service.

Westside Regional Center will arrange for an assessment to be completed by a vendored service provider to determine compatibility of this service with the abilities and goals of the individual.

The individual receiving independent living services must be 18 years or older and not be eligible to participate in programs funded by the public school system. Exceptions to this would include individuals who are at least 18 years of age, and although eligible for a school funded program, are not benefiting from school services and have opted for a certificate of completion.. Independent Living Services offer varying levels of instruction and support based on individual need.

1. **Independent Living Skills Training** provides intensive instruction and practice in natural settings. This service may be offered to individuals who have the desire to live independently, but need significant skill development in order to accomplish that goal. Individuals receiving this service may live in their own home or in the home of their family. For individuals receiving work training, the Independent Living Skills training must be scheduled so that it does not conflict with the individual's work schedule.
 - A. Before beginning Independent Living Skills Training in the family home or in a licensed residential setting, specific goals for independence must be identified. In addition, an independent living assessment must determine that opportunities exist to exercise independence in the identified goal areas.
 - B. Westside Regional Center will provide funding for Independent Living Skills Training for adults over 18 years. The individual's progress must be evaluated after one year of receipt of the service and the results of the evaluation must indicate that sufficient progress is being made toward gaining independence to warrant continuation of the service.
 - 1) If the individual is prohibited from exercising independence for all of the identified goal areas due to reasons other than lack of skills (for example, a person is not allowed to manage his or her own funds or use the kitchen for cooking, even if the person has the skills to do so), funding will not be approved for Independent Living Skills Training until the barriers to application are removed.
 - 2) If barriers to exercising independent living skills exist for some of the identified goal areas, the service may be funded if it can be demonstrated that opportunities for exercise of independence in these areas will exist in the near future. The person's IPP must contain objectives and strategies for creating such opportunities.

The basic level of need for each individual is determined by the individual support plan however, as needs change, service providers are expected to gear frequency of service to the needs of the person they support. As an example, frequency of service may increase if an individual temporarily needs additional assistance to cope with changes in a life condition or situations encountered that were not addressed in earlier training. Examples may include: a move to a new neighborhood necessitating assistance to locate resources or to use public transportation in the new area; loss of job causing financial and budgeting problems; difficulties with relationships causing significant problems (roommates, spouse, etc.); parenthood. Persons who have behavioral challenges may also need additional support from time to time.

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Exceptions

Westside Regional Center recognizes that some individual needs are so unique that they may not be addressed in this Service Policy and may require an exception. Such requests for an exception to a Service Policy will be made through Westside Regional Center's Purchase of Service Committee.