



Administration for Community Living

Administration on Disabilities

Office of Independent Living Programs

Centers for Independent Living Competition—Guam

Opportunity number: HHS-2026-ACL-AOD-IL-0014



Contents

	Before you begin	<u>3</u>
	Step 1: Review the Opportunity	<u>4</u>
	Basic information	<u>5</u>
	Eligibility	<u>7</u>
	Advancing independence and community living: ACL's strategic priorities	<u>9</u>
	Program description	<u>13</u>
	Step 2: Get Ready to Apply	<u>19</u>
	Find the application package	<u>20</u>
	Get registered	<u>21</u>
	Step 3: Build Your Application	<u>22</u>
	Application checklist	<u>23</u>
	Application contents and format	<u>24</u>
	Step 4: Learn About Review and Award	<u>32</u>
	Application review	<u>33</u>
	Award notices	<u>35</u>
	Step 5: Submit Your Application	<u>36</u>
	Application submission and deadlines	<u>37</u>
	Step 6: Learn What Happens After Award	<u>38</u>
	Post-award requirements and administration	<u>39</u>
	Contacts and Support	<u>41</u>



Before you begin

If you believe you are a good candidate for this funding opportunity, secure your [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#) registrations now. If you are already registered, make sure your registrations are active and up to date.

SAM.gov registration (this can take several weeks)

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

[See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply](#)

Grants.gov registration (this can take several days)

You must have an active Grants.gov registration. Doing so requires a Login.gov registration as well.

[See Step 2: Get Ready to Apply](#)

Apply by the application due date

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, August 3, 2026.



To help you find what you need, this NOFO uses internal links. In Adobe Reader, you can go back to where you were by pressing Alt + Left Arrow (Windows) or Command + Left Arrow (Mac) on your keyboard.



Step 1:

Review the Opportunity

In this step

Basic information	<u>5</u>
Eligibility	<u>7</u>
Advancing independence and community living: ACL's strategic priorities	<u>9</u>
Program description	<u>13</u>

Basic information

Administration for Community Living (ACL)

Administration on Disabilities

Office of Independent Living Programs

Funding a disability-led center for an independent living program that helps people with disabilities live independently through peer-based programs and support.

Summary

This program funds Centers for Independent Living to provide services to people with significant disabilities, as authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (the Act).

Centers funded must provide at least the following core services:

- Information and referral.
- Independent living skills training.
- Peer counseling.
- Individual and systems advocacy.
- Services that:
 - Help people transition from nursing homes and other facilities to the community.
 - Assist those at risk of entering facilities.
 - Help youth transition to postsecondary life. Centers also may provide, among other services:
 - Psychological counseling.
 - Assistance in securing housing or shelter, personal assistance services.
 - Transportation referral and assistance.
 - Physical therapy.
 - Mobility training.
 - Rehabilitation technology.
 - Recreation.



Have questions?

See [Contacts and Support](#).

Key facts

Opportunity name: Centers for Independent Living Competition in Guam

Opportunity number:
HHS-2026-ACL-AOD-IL-0014

Federal assistance listing:
93.432

Cost sharing: None

NOFO version: Original

Key dates

Application submission deadline:
August 3, 2026

Expected award date:
September 30, 2026

Expected project start date:
September 30, 2026

See [intergovernmental review](#) for other submission processes that may apply to this NOFO.

- Other services necessary to improve the ability of people with significant disabilities to function independently in the family or community, or to continue working.
- To continue receiving CIL program funding, eligible centers must demonstrate minimum compliance with the following standards:
 - Promotion of the IL philosophy, peer mentoring, and peer support.
 - Provision of IL services on a cross-disability basis.
 - Support for the development and achievement of IL goals chosen by the consumer.
 - Efforts to increase the availability of quality community options for IL.
 - Provision of IL core services and, as appropriate, a combination of any other IL service.
 - Building community capacity to meet the needs of people with significant disabilities.
 - Majority of staff are people with disabilities, including those in leadership positions.
 - Majority of board members have significant disabilities.
 - Resource development activities to secure other funding sources.

Funding details

Type: Grant

Expected total program funding over the performance period: \$247,308

Expected Total program funding per budget period: \$123,654

Total expected awards: 1

Funding range per applicant per budget period: \$123,654

We plan to fund one award in two 12-month budget periods for a two-year period of performance from September 30, 2026 to September 29, 2028.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants

Only these types of organizations may apply:

- Applicants are required to be consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential, private nonprofit agencies.
- All types of private nonprofit entities may apply, including:
 - Indian tribal organizations (American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native American).
 - Faith-based organizations.
 - Community-based organizations.

If the applicant does not meet the prior eligibility requirements and is not a nonprofit, the designated state entity may still apply under section 724 of the Act (29 U.S.C. 796f-3). (See the selection process section.)

Other eligibility criteria

- You must propose serving areas identified as unserved or underserved.
- You must demonstrate in your project narrative how a proposed new center is consistent with the design for a network of centers in the territory's Plan for Independent Living.
- Most of your center's staff, including the majority in decision-making positions, must be people with disabilities.
- Most of the board of directors must have significant disabilities.

Disqualifying factors

We will review your application to make sure it meets these responsiveness requirements. We won't consider an application that:

- Is submitted after the [deadline](#).
- Is from an individual, including a sole proprietorship, or a foreign entity.
- Is received in paper format that didn't have a previously approved exemption from ACL.
- Proposes to operate or manage a residential setting.

Application limits

If you submit the same application more than once under this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO), we will only acknowledge the last on-time submission.

Cost sharing

This program has no cost-sharing requirement, meaning you do not need to contribute to the costs of this project.

If you choose to include cost-sharing funds, we won't consider it during review. If you receive an award, we will include your voluntary commitment in the award.

Post-award requirements

Before you apply, make sure you understand the requirements that come with an award.

See [Step 6: Learn What Happens After Award](#) for information on regulations that apply, reporting, and more.

Statutory authority

[29 U.S.C. 796f-1](#), Section 721 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended

Advancing independence and community living: ACL's strategic priorities

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) was established to create opportunities for older adults and people with disabilities to live and engage in their communities. ACL strives to remove the obstacles that limit people's choices and ability to participate in community living.

This administration is committed to ensuring that government programs are a safety net of last resort. We affirm that people thrive when they do as much as they can for themselves and when families and communities are equipped to support their efforts and choices.

ACL's role is to address genuine needs and to help people overcome barriers that limit their ability to live independently and contribute to society.

ACL works hand-in-hand with more than 20 federal departments and agencies as well as states, tribes, territories, local governments, and the private sector to advance the shared priorities described below. Through these partnerships, ACL leverages the full capacity of the federal government to strengthen community living, expand access to services, and drive innovation across the aging and disability networks.

ACL's priorities advance the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) agenda, including by protecting the health of older Americans and people with disabilities, preserving their independence, supporting their caregivers, promoting their economic mobility, encouraging meaningful engagement, and expanding their opportunities for reasonable choices. We do this by strengthening the networks that serve older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers, scaling effective programs, and ensuring that ACL's investments are accountable and transparent.

Mission

Maximize the independence, well-being, and health of older adults, people with disabilities across their lifespan, and their families and caregivers.

Vision & Values

- For all people, regardless of age and disability, to live with dignity, make their own choices, and participate in society.
- For the people we serve, ACL promotes strategies that enable people to live in their communities.
- For our networks, ACL provides leadership and support.
- For our partners, ACL is a source of collaboration, innovation, and solutions.
- For our employees, ACL supports their contributions, professional growth, and work-life balance.
- For the public, ACL is an effective steward of public resources and a source for information.

ACL's Strategic Priorities

Caregiving

- Caregivers are central to independence and community living. ACL will expand and strengthen support for families and caregivers, both paid and unpaid. ACL will:
- Scale programs that are proven to support caregivers, including respite care and family caregiver services.
- Build grant recipient's capacity to deliver sustainable support for caregivers.
- Embed caregiving in health and social systems as a critical prevention strategy against institutionalization.

Connecting People to Services

People must be able to find and navigate services when they need them. ACL will:

- Invest in outreach, marketing, communications, and education to make programs visible and accessible.
- Simplify and modernize systems so that the public knows where to go and how to get the supports they need.
- Expand and strengthen resources made available by aging and disability networks, including Area Agencies on Aging, Centers for Independent Living, Aging and Disability Resource Centers, among others.

Whole-person health

ACL will prioritize grants that integrate health care and community-based service interventions that enable community living and reduce costs. ACL will:

- Scale evidence-based programs in nutrition, falls prevention, chronic disease self-management, health promotion, medication management, pain management, and dementia care.
- Support interventions proven to maximize independence, health, function, savings, and avoidance of unnecessary clinical and institutional care.
- Position the aging and disability networks of services and supports across the nation as essential partners to health systems.
- Expand the capacity of community care hubs (CCH) to bridge health care entities and networks of community-based providers.

Employment

Employment is fundamental to independence and economic mobility. ACL will prioritize grants and activities that emphasize the value of work, self-sufficiency, and community participation for all. ACL will:

- Create awareness, remove barriers, and expand access to competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities and older adults who wish to work.
- Partner with federal, state, and local agencies to coordinate employment, training, and support services.
- Promote policies that remove barriers to work and strengthen the capacity of ACL's networks of community-based organizations to connect individuals to meaningful jobs.
- Promote awareness among employers about retirement planning and ABLE accounts for persons with disabilities to support long-term self-sufficiency.

Protecting Rights and Preventing Abuse

Protecting rights and preventing abuse are essential to dignity and independence. ACL's leadership affirms that every person, regardless of age or disability, should be able to live safely and free from harm. ACL will:

- Strengthen protection and advocacy systems that safeguard the rights of older adults and people with disabilities.
- Expand elder justice initiatives that prevent, detect, and respond to abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Enhance collaboration among federal, state, and community partners to improve prevention and accountability.

- Invest in data and research to understand and address systemic risks to individual rights and safety.

Economic Security

Economic security is foundational to independence, dignity, and community living. Older adults and people with disabilities must be able to access affordable nutritious food, essential services, assistive technology, and economic opportunities without unnecessary financial or bureaucratic barriers. ACL will:

- Expand and simplify access to affordable, healthy food and preventive nutrition interventions to prevent and reverse chronic disease, restore health, and reduce costs of care.
- Reduce financial and bureaucratic barriers by making it easier for people to understand and access public benefits, eliminating unnecessary administrative obstacles, and strengthening oversight to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.
- Promote economic independence and long-term financial stability through financial literacy, asset development strategies—including retirement planning, ABLE accounts, Trump accounts—and other mechanisms that allow individuals to remain in their homes and communities.
- Increase awareness and access to essential programs, supports, and tools that are cost-effective and enable affordable community living.

Program description

Background

Centers for Independent Living (CILs):

- Are consumer-driven agencies that work with people with significant disabilities.
 - A “person with a significant disability,” in this context, means a person:
 - With a severe physical or mental impairment.
 - Whose ability to function independently in the family or community or whose ability to obtain, maintain, or advance in employment is substantially limited.
 - Who can function better, keep functioning, or move toward functioning independently in the family or in the community, or keep working, if they receive services (29 U.S.C. 705(21)(B)).
- Provide independent living services focused on enabling people to achieve independence in their community.
- Were created under title VII, Part C, section 721 of the Act and amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in 2014 (29 U.S.C. subpart 3, Centers for Independent Living).
- Must adhere to standards in section 725 of the Act (29 U.S.C. 796f-4).

Required activities, standards, and assurances

Under this program, we require you to carry out certain activities. Be sure to address them all in your project narrative.

The required standards are that the center:

- Promote and practice the independent living philosophy.
- Provide services to people with a range of significant disabilities on a cross-disability basis and not condition eligibility for services on any one or more specific significant disabilities.
- Facilitate development and achievement of independent living goals selected by consumers.
- Work to increase the availability and improve the quality of community options for independent living.
- Provide independent living core services and, as appropriate, other independent living services.

- Conduct activities to increase the capacity of communities within the service area to meet the needs of people with significant disabilities.
- Conduct resource development.

The required assurances are that the center:

- Be eligible for Part C funding.
- Be designed and operated within local communities by people with significant disabilities.
 - Including a board that:
 - Is the principal governing body.
 - Consists mostly of people with significant disabilities.
- Establishes clear priorities through annual and 3-year program and financial planning.
- Uses sound organizational and personnel assignment practices, including affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified people with significant disabilities on the same terms and conditions that section 503 requires for employment of people with disabilities.
- Ensure that most of the center's staff, including most managers, have disabilities.
- Practice sound fiscal management.
- Conduct annual self-evaluations, prepare an annual report, and maintain records.
- Notify people with significant disabilities who seek or receive services at the center of the existence of, availability of, and how to contact, the client assistance program.
- Do aggressive outreach.
- Ensure that center staff receive training on how to serve unserved and underserved populations, including minority groups and urban and rural populations.
- Submit to the Statewide Independent Living Council a copy of the approved grant application and annual report.
- Annually prepare and submit a report to the Designated State Entity or to ACL.
- Ensure that people the center serves develop independent living plans unless they sign waivers.

Funding policies and limitations

Changes in HHS regulations

As of October 1, 2025, HHS adopted [2 CFR 200](#), with some exceptions included in [2 CFR 300](#). These regulations replace those in 45 CFR 75.

Policies

All activities proposed in your application and budget narrative must align with applicable law, including but not limited to statutes, executive orders, federal regulations, and applicable judicial holdings. Accordingly, discretionary awards shall not be used to fund, promote, encourage, subsidize, or facilitate: racial preferences or other forms of racial discrimination by the recipient, including activities where race or intentional proxies for race will be used as a selection criterion for employment or program participation; denial by the recipient of the sex binary in humans, or the belief that sex is a chosen or mutable characteristic; illegal immigration; or any other initiatives that compromise public safety. If an application does not align, the application will not receive funding to the extent permitted by law and applicable court orders.

- We will only make awards if this program receives funding. If Congress appropriates funds for this purpose, we will move forward with the review and award process.
- Support beyond the first budget period will depend on:
 - Appropriation of funds.
 - Satisfactory progress in meeting your project's objectives.
 - A decision that continued funding is in the government's best interest.
- If we receive more funding for this program, we will consider:
 - Funding more applicants.
 - Extending the period of performance.
 - Awarding supplemental funding.
- You may not use funds from this NOFO for any diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEI and DEIA) activities. This includes:
 - DEI- or DEIA-related research.
 - Activities that discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or other protected traits.
- Under this NOFO, you can't continue existing projects without expansion or new and innovative approaches.
- Meals are allowed only in limited circumstances linked to program activities, like during travel or when approved in advance by ACL. See Allowable Costs and

Activities, Exhibit 4: Selected Items of Cost, Meals in the [HHS Grants Policy Statement](#).

- There are restrictions on certain telecommunications and video surveillance equipment. See [2 CFR 200.216](#) to make sure this does not apply to any proposed equipment in your application.

Unallowable costs

- Construction or major rehabilitation of buildings.
- Basic research, such as scientific or medical experiments.
- For guidance on other types of costs that we restrict or do not allow, see General Provisions for Selected Items of Costs of the Uniform Guidance, [2 CFR 200.420](#).

Program-specific limitations and policies

In addition to the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200 and the HHS Grants Policy Statement, the following program-specific limitations and policies apply to awards made under this NOFO. These limitations are intended to ensure that Federal funds are used in a manner consistent with the purpose of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the requirements for Centers for Independent Living at 45 CFR Part 1329.

Allowable Costs

All costs charged to the award must be necessary, reasonable, allocable, and allowable in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200 and must directly support the provision of independent living core services and other authorized activities consistent with Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act and 45 CFR Part 1329.

Administrative and Indirect Costs

Administrative and indirect costs charged to the award must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200. Recipients must have a current federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement or may elect to use the *de minimis* indirect cost rate of up to 15% of modified total direct costs in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.414(f).

Subawards

Recipients may grant subawards in accordance with 2 CFR §§ 200.331–200.333, if all subawarded activities directly support the purposes of the CIL program and the recipient retains responsibility for programmatic and fiscal oversight. Subawards may not be used to diminish the recipient's responsibility to operate as a Center for Independent Living in compliance with Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act and 45 CFR Part 1329.

Pre-Award Costs

Pre-award costs are not allowable under this NOFO. Applicants may not incur costs before the start date of the award and seek reimbursement from Federal funds awarded under this program.

Indirect costs

Indirect costs are those shared across multiple projects and not easily separated.

To charge indirect costs you can select one of two methods:

Method 1 — Approved rate. If you currently have an indirect cost rate approved by your cognizant federal agency, you may use that rate.

Method 2 — *De minimis* rate. If you do not have a negotiated indirect cost rate, you may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate (see [2 CFR § 200.414\(f\)](#)). This rate may be up to 15% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). See the definition of MTDC ([2 CFR § 200.1](#)). You can use this rate indefinitely.

You may not charge costs included in your indirect cost pool as direct costs.

Subawards

As the prime recipient, you must maintain a substantive role in the project. This means that you conduct funded activities and provide services necessary and integral to completing the project.

Monitoring your subrecipient's activities alone as described in [2 CFR § 200.332](#) is not a substantive role.

We do not fund awards where your role is primarily a conduit for passing funds to other organizations unless that arrangement is authorized by statute.

All subrecipients must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) through the System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

Subrecipients must meet the [eligibility requirements](#) of this NOFO.

Salary rate limitation

The salary rate limitation in the current appropriations act applies to this program. You may not use awarded funds to pay a salary at a higher rate than the rate for Executive Level II.

For the Executive Level II salary, please see [the Office of Personnel Management information on executive and senior level employee pay](#).

The salary limitation reflects a person's base salary (including any portion of the salary that is paid with indirect costs). It does not include fringe benefits or any income the person is allowed to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization.

This salary limitation also applies to subawards, contracts, and subcontracts under an ACL grant or cooperative agreement.

Program income

If you earn any money from your award-supported project activities (known as program income), you must use it for the purposes and under the conditions of the award. Find more about program income at [2 CFR § 200.307](#).



Step 2:

Get Ready to Apply

In this step

Find the application package 20

Get registered 21

Find the application package

The application package has all the forms you need to apply. You can search for it at [Grants.gov](#) using opportunity number {HHS-2026-ACL-AOD-IL-0014}. Then select the Package tab.

We recommend that you select the **Subscribe button** from the View Grant Opportunity page for this NOFO to get updates.

You can also find materials at [Applying for Grants on ACL's website](#).

If you can't use Grants.gov to download application materials or have other technical difficulties, including issues with application submission, [contact Grants.gov](#) for assistance.

Get registered

SAM.gov

You must have an active account with SAM.gov to apply. SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. Begin that process today.

To register:

- Go to [SAM.gov Entity Registration](#) and select Get Started. From the same page, you can also select the Entity Registration Checklist for the information you will need to register.
- You must agree to the financial assistance general certifications and representations [PDF] specifically. Those for contracts are different.

When you register, you will also receive your required Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

Once you register:

- You will have to maintain your registration throughout the life of any award.
- If your organization has multiple UEIs, use the one associated with your physical location.

Grants.gov

You must also have an active account with [Grants.gov](#). You can see step-by-step instructions at the Grants.gov [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#).

Need help? See [Contacts and Support](#).



Step 3:

Build Your Application

In this step

Application checklist	<u>23</u>
Application contents and format	<u>24</u>

Application checklist

Make sure that you have everything you need to apply. You will find the forms in Grants.gov.

Narratives

Item	Grants.gov form	Page limit
☐ Project narrative	Use the Project Narrative Attachment form.	20 pages
☐ Budget narrative	Use the Budget Narrative Attachment form.	None

Attachments

Insert each in a single Other Attachments Form.

Item	Page limit
☐ Indirect cost agreement	None
☐ Commitment letters	None
☐ Proof of nonprofit status	None
☐ Resumes and job descriptions	None

Other required forms

Use each required form in Grants.gov.

Item	Page limit
☐ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	None
☐ Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	None
☐ Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)	None
☐ Key Contacts form	None
☐ Grants.gov Lobbying form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)	None
☐ Project/Performance Site Location form	None

Application contents and format

This section includes guidance on each component found in the application checklist.

Application page limit: None

Submit your information in English and express whole number budget figures using U.S. dollars.

Required format

Required format for project and budget narratives.

Font: Times New Roman or Arial

Format: PDF

Size: 11-point font

Footnotes and text in graphics may be 10-point.

Spacing for project narrative main content: Double-spaced

Spacing for budget narrative: As needed

Spacing for project summary, tables, footnotes: Single-spaced

Margins: 1-inch

Include page numbers.

Project narrative

Page limit: 20

The project narrative is the most important part of the application. We use it as the primary basis to decide whether your project meets the statutory requirements and to review its merit. The project narrative should give a clear and concise description of your project.

Be sure to cite all your sources. Merit reviewers may lower your score if you do not.

Also study the merit review criteria under each section to make sure you answer all questions and cover all topics reviewers will look at.

Project summary

Provide a brief project summary of no more than 265 words. Write it for the general public. You will need to include:

- **Goals:** Broad overall purpose, like a mission statement that says what you want to do and where you want to be.
- **Objectives:** Narrow, specific, and clear steps toward the goals. These are the “hows” to achieve the goals.
- **Overall approach:** General overview of what you will do.
- **Outcomes:** These are the measurable results of a project. Include expected changes among those served, such as clients, systems, organizations, and communities. These should tie directly to your goals and those of this funding.
- **Products:** The materials and other deliverables you expect to generate through the project.
- **Duration:** The anticipated start and end dates of the period of performance.

Project relevance and current need

Maximum points: 20 points

Problem statement

Describe the problem that your center plans to solve and how it aligns with ACL’s strategic priorities.

Goals and objectives

- **Goals:** Broad overall purpose, like a mission statement that says what you want to do and how you want to do it.
- **Objectives:** Narrow, specific, and clear steps toward the goals. These are the “hows” to achieve the goals.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent that the applicant provides:	Point value
Is the problem statement and overall project goal aligned with ACL’s strategic priorities?	10 points
Are the objectives narrow, specific, and clear steps toward the goals?	10 points

Approach

Maximum points: 20 points

Proposed intervention

Please refer to ACL's strategic priorities and the Program Description section when answering the following questions.

- Describe how the proposed program will meet the statutory definition of a Part C center for independent living and will comply with the standards and assurances in section 725 of the Rehab Act, as amended.
- Describe the issues specific to the service area, how the program will address these issues, and how this intervention is in alignment with ACL priorities.

Project management

Describe how the applicant will manage the day-to-day operations of the proposed Center for Independent Living project. Include the management structure, staff roles, decision-making process, fiscal oversight, service coordination, performance tracking, reporting, compliance, and partner coordination. Describe how people with disabilities will participate in leadership and decision-making for the project, including oversight by the board, management staff, and other key personnel, as applicable.

Describe how the applicant will monitor progress toward the work plan, ensure timely completion of activities, address challenges, maintain accessible and consumer-driven services, and ensure compliance with the CIL standards and assurances under the Rehabilitation Act.

Work plan

You must provide a work plan for your project. The work plan connects your period of performance outcomes, strategies and activities, and measures. It provides more detail on how you will measure outcomes and processes.

To create your work plan:

- Use the [Project Work Plan Sample Template](#) on our website.
- Include the project's overall goal, expected outcomes, key objectives, and the major action steps needed to achieve them.
- For each major action step, include start and end dates and the lead responsible person.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
Does the application describe how the program will meet the statutory definition of a CIL and adhere to the standards and assurances in section 725 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 796f-4)?	5 points
Does the application describe the issues specific to the service area, how the program will address these issues, and how it aligns with ACL's priorities?	5 points
Does the organization adequately describe who will manage the project, how they will manage the project, and how they will include people with disabilities?	5 points
Does the organization provide a work plan with strategies and activities that are connected to outcomes?	5 points

Project Impact

Maximum points: 20 points

Special target populations and organizations

Describe the populations and organizations the proposed center will focus on within the service area, including people with significant disabilities who are unserved or underserved. Include factors that affect their access to independent living services and how the center will conduct outreach to these populations and organizations, and ensure services are accessible, consumer-controlled, cross-disability, and responsive to local needs.

Outcomes

Describe the specific results the project expects to achieve for people with significant disabilities and the broader community. Outcomes should be aligned to ACL's strategic priorities, measurable, tied to the project's goals and activities, and reflect increased independence, access to services, community living, consumer choice, or systems change. Reviewers will score your application on the clarity and nature of your proposed outcomes, not on the number of outcomes.

Evaluation

Describe how the applicant will track progress, measure outcomes, and use data to improve project performance. Include the tools, data sources, timelines, and staff responsible for monitoring activities, services, consumer outcomes, and work plan progress.

Dissemination

Describe how the applicant will share information about the project, available services, promising practices, and results with consumers, community partners, referral sources, and other interested audiences. Dissemination methods may include accessible materials, outreach events, partner meetings, websites, social media, reports, or other communication strategies.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
Does the application describe their target populations, factors that affect their access, and how they will conduct outreach?	5 points
Does the application clearly identify the measurable outcomes that people with significant disabilities and the community will achieve from this project and align these outcomes with ACL priorities?	5 points
Does the application include a sound evaluation plan with appropriate tools and timelines to track progress, measure outcomes, and improve performance?	5 points
Does the application include how project information will be shared with consumers, community partners, and the general public?	5 points

Capability and expertise

Maximum points: 20 points

Organizational capability

Describe the organization's overall capacity to carry out the project, including its governance, administrative systems, fiscal controls, facilities, accessibility practices, and ability to comply with federal grant requirements. Focus on the organization's infrastructure and systems, rather than individual staff qualifications.

Experience of the project team

Describe the relevant qualifications and experience of key staff, board members, consultants, or partners who will carry out the project. Focus on their experience with CIL operations, independent living services, disability-led programs, fiscal or program management, community partnerships, and serving people with significant disabilities.

Table: Scoring criteria

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
Does the applicant adequately describe its overall capacity to carry out the project, including its governance, administrative systems, fiscal controls, facilities, accessibility practices, and ability to comply with federal grant requirements?	10 points
Does the application show that the project team has experience with CIL operations, independent living services, disability-led programs, fiscal or program management, community partnerships, and/or serving people with significant disabilities?	10 points

Budget narrative

Maximum points: 20 points

Page limit: None

The budget narrative supports the information you provide in [Standard Form-424A](#).

It includes added detail and justifies the costs you ask for. As you think about your budget, consider:

- If the costs are reasonable and consistent with your project's purpose and activities. The restrictions on spending funds. See [funding policies and limitations](#).

When you develop your budget narrative:

- We encourage you to use the [ACL Budget Narrative Sample Format \[PDF\]](#). This format shows the level of detail we are looking for in your application.
- Justify all the costs and show how you calculated them.
- You will need to create a budget narrative that shows all years combined along with separate, detailed budget narratives for each year.

Reviewers will assess your budget (SF-424A) and your budget narrative to score this section.

Table: Scoring criteria for budget and budget narrative

Reviewers will evaluate the extent to which the applicant provides:	Point value
Does the budget narrative include all of the requested information and align with the work plan?	20 points

Attachments

You will upload attachments in Grants.gov using the Other Attachments form.

Indirect cost agreement

If you include indirect costs in your budget using an approved rate, include a copy of your current agreement approved by your [cognizant agency for indirect costs \[PDF\]](#). If you use the *de minimis* rate, you do not need to submit this attachment.

Commitment letters

Include letters from any organization that will have a significant role in carrying out your project. The letter should explain their role and their commitment to the project.

Proof of nonprofit status

If your organization is a nonprofit, you need to attach proof. We will accept any of the following:

- A copy of a current tax exemption certificate from the IRS.
- A letter from your state's tax department, attorney general, or another state official saying that your group is a nonprofit and that none of your net earnings go to private shareholders or others.
- A certified copy of your certificate of incorporation. This document must show that your group is a nonprofit.
- Any of these documents for a parent organization. Also include a statement signed by an official of the parent group that your organization is a nonprofit affiliate.

Resumes and job descriptions

For key personnel, attach resumes for positions that are filled. For positions that aren't filled, attach the job descriptions with qualifications.

Other required forms

You will need to complete some other forms in Grants.gov. You can find them in the NOFO [application package](#) or review them and their instructions at [Grants.gov Forms](#).

Form	Submission requirement
☐ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	None
☐ Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	None
☐ Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)	None
☐ Key Contacts form	None
☐ Grants.gov Lobbying form (Certification Regarding Lobbying)	None
☐ Project/Performance Site Location form	None

Important: Public information

When filling out your SF-424 form, pay attention to Box 15: Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project.

We share what you put there with [USAspending](#). This is where the public goes to learn how the federal government spends their money.

Instead of just a title, insert a short description of your project and what it will do.

[See instructions and examples \[PDF\]](#).



Step 4:

Learn About Review and Award

In this step

Application review	<u>33</u>
Award notices	<u>35</u>

Application review

Initial review

We will review your application to make sure that it meets the responsiveness requirements listed in the [disqualification factors section](#). If your application does not meet these criteria, we will disqualify it and we will not move it to the merit review (scoring) phase.

We will not review any pages over the page limit.

Scoring process

A panel reviews all applications that pass the initial review. The members use the merit review scoring criteria in the project narrative and budget narrative sections of this NOFO. You can find the specific criteria in each section of the project narrative and in the budget narrative section.

Criteria summary

Heading	Points
Project summary	0 points
Purpose and need	20 points
Response	20 points
Impact	20 points
Resources and capabilities	40 points

Risk review

Before making an award, we review the risk that you will mismanage federal funds or fail to complete the project objectives. We need to make sure you've handled any past federal awards well and demonstrated sound business practices.

We use [SAM.gov](#) Responsibility/Qualification to check this history for all awards likely to be over \$250,000. We also check Exclusions.

If we find a significant risk, we may choose not to fund your application or to place specific

conditions on the award.

You can see more details about risk review at [2 CFR 200.206](#).

Selection process

When making funding decisions, we consider:

- Merit review results. These are key in making decisions but are not the only factor.
- The larger portfolio of agency-funded projects, including project type and geographic distribution.
- The past performance of the applicant. We may choose not to fund applicants with management or financial problems.
- Reasonableness of proposed costs to the expected results and the likelihood you will achieve those results.
- Available funding.

We may:

- Fund applications in whole or in part.
- Fund applications at a lower amount than requested.
- Decide not to allow a prime recipient to subaward if they may not be able to monitor and manage subrecipients properly.
- Choose to fund no applications under this funding opportunity.

The ACL administrator makes all final award decisions.

Funding preferences for alignment with agency priorities

Before we make final funding decisions, ACL leadership will review all potential awards.

They will check for:

- Adherence to applicable laws.
- Alignment to agency priorities (see [Administration for Community Living's \(ACL\) Mission, Vision & Strategic Priorities](#)).

To the extent allowed by law and court orders, we will give a funding preference to applications that align with agency priorities.

Your application may receive this preference if it shows examples of proposed activities that align with ACL's strategic priorities, including 'connecting people to services,' 'whole person health,' and/or 'economic security.'

Merit review criteria also include factors related to ACL's priorities.

Award notices

If your application is successful, we will email a Notice of Award (NoA) to your authorized official. We will email you or write you a letter if your application is disqualified or unsuccessful.

The NoA is the only official award document. The NoA tells you the amount of the award, important dates, and the terms and conditions you need to follow. Until you receive the NoA, you don't have permission to start work.

[See an example NoA on our website \[PDF\].](#)



Step 5:

Submit Your Application

In this step

Application submission and deadlines

37

Application submission and deadlines

See find the application package and the [application checklist](#) to make sure you have everything you need.

Make sure you are current with SAM.gov and UEI requirements. See [get registered](#). You will have to maintain your registration throughout the life of any award.

Application

Deadline

Due on Monday, August 3, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. ET.

Grants.gov creates a date and time record when it receives the application. If you submit the same application more than once, we will accept the last on-time submission.

The grants management officer may extend an application due date based on emergency situations such as documented natural disasters or a verifiable widespread disruption of electric or mail service.

Submission method

You must submit your application through Grants.gov. See [get registered](#).

For instructions on how to submit in Grants.gov, see the [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#). Make sure your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks. Do not encrypt, zip, or password protect any files.

If you can't submit your application because of problems with Grants.gov, you will need verification for us to consider accepting your application. Call the [Federal Service Desk](#) [\[PDF\]](#) before the application due time and record your tracking number. Save your tracking number and any error messages you receive.

See [Contacts and Support](#) if you need help.

Intergovernmental review

[Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs](#) does not apply to this NOFO. You do not need to take any action.



Step 6:

Learn What Happens After Award

In this step

Post-award requirements and administration 39

Post-award requirements and administration

Administrative and national policy requirements

There are important rules you need to know if you get an award. You must follow:

- All terms and conditions in the Notice of Award. You can find information at [Managing a Grant on our website](#). We incorporate this NOFO by reference.
- The rules listed in [2 CFR 200](#), Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements, effective October 1, 2025. These replace those in 45 CFR 75, with some exceptions in [2 CFR 300](#).
- The HHS [Grants Policy Statement \(GPS\) \[PDF\]](#). This document has terms and conditions tied to your award. If there are any exceptions to the GPS, they'll be listed in your Notice of Award.
- All federal statutes and regulations relevant to federal financial assistance, including those highlighted in the [HHS Grants Policy Statement](#), Appendix D: HHS Administrative and National Policy Requirements.
- All anti-discrimination laws: By applying for or accepting federal funds from HHS, recipients certify compliance with all federal antidiscrimination laws and these requirements and that complying with those laws is a material condition of receiving federal funding streams. Recipients are responsible for ensuring subrecipients, contractors, and partners also comply.

Compliance and oversight

Recipients must demonstrate ongoing compliance with the [Administration for Community Living's \(ACL\) Mission, Vision & Strategic Priorities](#) through program design, implementation, performance reporting, fiscal management, and evaluation.

Failure to meaningfully align funded activities with applicable statutory authorities and agency priorities may result in corrective action, additional reporting requirements, enforcement actions, or other remedies consistent with 2 CFR Part 200 and the terms and conditions of the award.

Through alignment with these priorities, funded projects will help ensure that older adults and people with disabilities can live with dignity, independence, and full participation in the communities they call home.

Managing award changes

After award, either you or ACL may request changes. We manage these using the rules at 2 CFR 200 and 300, including [2 CFR 200.308](#) and [2 CFR 300.308](#).

Reporting

If your application is successful, you will have to submit financial and performance reports. To learn more about reporting, see [Managing a Grant, Funding Requirements on our website](#).

Financial and performance reports

The terms and conditions in the Notice of Award will have information on performance and financial reports including:

- How often you will report.
- Any required form or formatting.
- How to submit them.

FFATA and FSRs reporting

The Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) requires:

- Data entry at the FFATA Subaward Reporting System for all subawards and subcontracts you issue for \$30,000 or more.
- Reporting executive compensation for both recipient and subaward organizations.



Contacts and Support

In this step

Agency contacts	<u>42</u>
Help with systems	<u>42</u>
Reference websites	<u>43</u>

Agency contacts

Program and eligibility

Peter Nye

peter.nye@acl.hhs.gov

202-795-7606

Financial and budget

Rasheed Williams

Rasheed.Williams@acl.hhs.gov

Review process and application status

Peter Nye

Peter.nye@acl.hhs.gov

202-795-7606

Help with systems

Grants.gov

Grants.gov provides 24/7 support. Hold on to your ticket number.

- Phone: 1-800-518-4726
- Email: support@Grants.gov

SAM.gov

If you need help, you can:

- Call 866-606-8220.
- Live chat with the [Federal Service Desk](#).

Reference websites

- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\)](#)
- [Home Page | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Applying for Grants | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Application Tips | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [How to Apply for a Competitive Grant | ACL Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Centers for Independent Living](#)
- [Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) on State Independent Living Services and Centers for Independent Living](#)
- [Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#)
- [Centers for Independent Living program authorization](#)
- [Standards and assurances for centers for independent living](#)