

# **Alpha One-- Maine's Center for Independent Living (CIL)**

## Historical context

- Deinstitutionalization began in the 1960s
- People with disabilities left institutions
  - Now living freer and more independent lives.
- Push for human rights for people with disabilities during a time when civil rights were expanding through the country
- Centers for Independent Living (CILs) were created to be run by and for people with disabilities to offer support, advocacy, and information on empowerment
  - Attainment of independence with support from peers
  - “Services for the disabled”
- ADA
  - As Independent Living philosophy expanded
    - The Disability Rights Movement gained political influence
    - Grassroots movement for a comprehensive disability rights law (the ADA) was implemented
- CILs today
  - Centers for Independent Living fight continued battles to ensure that the rights of people with disabilities are protected.

## Overview of CILs

- Community-based
- Cross-disability
- Non-profit organizations
- Governed and managed by people with disabilities for people with disabilities
- Philosophy of consumer control
  - People with all types of disabilities directly govern and staff the organizations
- Nationally:
  - 403 Centers for Independent Living (CILs)
  - 56 Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs)
- Core Services of a CIL
  - Information and referral
    - Providing information on disability and independent living topics and resources
      - To individuals with disabilities, families, community members, and service providers
    - Referring the above to appropriate organizations or services

- Advocacy
  - Assisting persons with disabilities to take charge of choices and act on their own behalf to overcome situations that may impact their independence
  - Systemically, Alpha One advocates for programs and services at various government levels
- Peer support
  - Connecting consumers and peers to providing information and support to one another
- Transition Services
  - For adults, Alpha One assists individuals to move from a setting of greater restriction (i.e. nursing home) to one of more independence (i.e. community)
  - For youth, helping to plan transition to post high school life
- Skills training
  - Working with consumers to develop skills to achieve or increase independence

## Alpha One—Maine’s Center for Independent Living (CIL)

- Established in 1978 to enable Mainers with disabilities to live more independently and fully in all aspects of their lives
  - Governed, managed, and staffed primarily by individuals with disabilities
    - Offices in South Portland, Bangor, and Presque Isle
  - Offer a variety of programs and services for people with disabilities of all ages, their families, and the general public
- The Independent Living Philosophy & Culture
    - Alpha One supports the concept of consumer self-direction
      - The ability to plan, initiate, organize, and carry out purposeful activities related to self-care, independent living, and work
        - We encourage the consumers to be knowledgeable of their disability, have goals for independence, and advocate for their needs
      - Alpha One’s Independent Living Services can assist consumers with finding the tools and information they need to meet their goals for independence and self-reliance

- Alpha One Staff
  - Independent Living Specialists who can share knowledge with individuals with disabilities about Alpha One services, funding opportunities, advances in assistive technology, and government legislation

### Alpha One Programs and Services *(in addition to CIL Core Services)*

- Personal Care Programs – Consumer Directed or Agency Based
  - CDAS/Section 12 – Mainecare funded
  - Section 19 – Mainecare funded
  - Section 96 – Mainecare funded
  - HBC – State funded
- Title 7 Part B Grant Program
  - \$5,000 lifetime cap. Can be used all at once or over several years.
    - Used to address any disability related needs.
- Critical Access
  - Ramp specific grant program
- Adapted equipment Loan Program
  - Financial loans for adaptive equipment or assistive technology
  - Non-commercial lending criteria
  - Financial support services and intake, information and referral
  - Disability-related purchases
  - \$250-\$100,000
- Access Design
  - Licensed architect available for residential and commercial applications
- Adapted Driving Evaluation
  - Completed by Occupational Therapists dually licensed as driving educators
  - First in the State
- Agrability
  - Farming
  - Forestry
  - Fishing
  - Assists workers whose productivity is impacted by chronic illness or injury
- Transition services
  - Homeward Bound
    - Transitioning to the community from a nursing facility
- Additional programs
  - Other Related Conditions Waiver
  - Financial Management/Fiscal intermediary services
    - Payroll services for PA program consumers
    - Payroll services for consumers/families paying for PA services out of pocket