



Minnesota Statewide  
Independent Living Council



**2018 ANNUAL REPORT**

**MINNESOTA  
STATEWIDE  
INDEPENDENT  
LIVING COUNCIL**



**OCTOBER 1, 2017 — SEPTEMBER 30, 2018**

# WHAT IS THE MINNESOTA STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL?

The Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council (MNSILC) is authorized under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Members are appointed by the governor to provide guidance to Minnesota’s independent living services. The council’s main responsibilities are to develop, monitor, review, and evaluate a State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). For more information on the council, including how to join, see the MNSILC website at [mn.gov/deed/silc](http://mn.gov/deed/silc).

## MNSILC Mission

The Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council advances the philosophy of independent living and promotes the integration and full inclusion of people with disabilities into Minnesota communities.

## MNSILC Vision

The Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council will engage Minnesota communities to recognize and champion the critical needs of people with disabilities and promote statewide coverage by Centers for Independent Living.

## Council Members

Jessica Andrist	Mary Koep	Mark Smaaladen
Tammie Campbell	Gloria LaFriniere	Annette Toews
Melissa Doherty	Linda Lingen	Brian Wagner
David Fenley	Larry Lura	Brad Westerlund
Zainab Jama	Anita Olson	

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

My time on the Minnesota Statewide Independent Council (MNSILC) has been an amazing experience. I have had the opportunity to work with a wonderful council and appreciate the time and effort they have put in, especially over this past year with all the changes we have encountered.

Throughout this past year we continued to work on our current State Plan, implementing the vision the council had for promoting the independent living philosophy across the state of Minnesota. A lot of time and effort went into exploring ways we could develop a plan that would positively affect the lives of Minnesotans with disabilities.

A big effort this year has been dedicated to strengthening the relationship between the SILC and the Centers for Independent Living. Each center is mandated to provide five core services: information and referral, independent living skills training, advocacy, peer counseling and transition. In May, the council met in Sauk Rapids where we learned about ILICIL's program and the work they do in their service area, not only with the five core services, but also with programs that are unique to their center. Council members also attended compliance reviews at five centers where we had the opportunity to visit with staff and learn about their center and the challenges and successes they experience. The council formed a committee that is comprised of both center staff and council members to work on ways we can collaborate on promoting the independent living philosophy throughout Minnesota. Centers provided training and information regarding issues that affect the lives of people with disabilities, such as PCA services and self-advocacy.

To continue educational and training efforts on new requirements and laws, the Council sent members to the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) conference and the SILC Congress conference. At NCIL, members had the opportunity to meet with federal legislators and inform them of the work that both SILC and the centers do in Minnesota. At SILC Congress, members were able to network with other independent living councils and learn about their states and the work they are doing.

As I stated earlier, this has been a year of challenges and changes for MNSILC.

At the Council level, our coordinator, Pam Taylor, resigned in May. After an extensive search and many good applicants, we were excited to welcome Jo Erbes as our new coordinator. Jo began her duties in October 2018 and has done a wonderful job.

At the agency level there was a change in administration at our DSE, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). In January of this year Larry Vrooman took leadership at VR. MNSILC is looking forward to continuing our long and productive relationship under his leadership.

On the state level, Minnesota welcomed new Governor Tim Walz. As a governor-appointed council we look forward to the opportunity to work with him and his staff on issues that affect Minnesotans with disabilities.

In October, November and December SILC members and CIL staff worked on developing a new State Plan. We largely completed that task; however the new plan will not be implemented in 2020 as expected due to challenges the ACL had in formatting new forms for the state plans. Instead we will enjoy a "gap year" with the opportunity to complete and expand on our current State Plan. The implementation date for the new State Plan will begin in October 2020.

I am grateful for this incredible learning experience and want to thank current members, past members and future members, as well as the centers who do such amazing work throughout our state. We are all part of an incredible network, working to promote independence, choice and inclusion for people with disabilities throughout Minnesota.

Gratefully,

*Anita Olson*



Anita Olson, MNSILC Chair

## ADVOCATES FOR INDEPENDENCE



*Men and women of MNSILC participate in a meeting.*

In September, the MNSILC Outreach Committee invited the centers for independent living to nominate businesses, city departments and/or other entities in their communities who made exceptional efforts to improve equal access or community inclusion for all people with disabilities.

After reviewing nominations, the MNSILC Outreach Committee awarded a certificate recognizing the Marcus Parkwood Cinema in Waite Park, MN for their efforts in improving the theater experience.

Advocates for Independence, a program of Independent Lifestyles, Inc. A Center for Independent Living in Sauk Rapids (ILICIL), nominated Marcus Parkwood Cinema for making exceptional efforts to improve their services to better serve our community for inclusion of all people including those with disabilities. The Marcus Parkwood Cinema listened to advocates concerns and improved the following:

- Making available more devices for hearing impaired people
- Installing a new Wi-Fi server to connect devices for quality service
- Adding descriptive headphones for blind and deaf patrons
- Assuring regular maintenance of the aforementioned devices

“Since these improvements were made,” said Beverly Joyce, President of Advocates for Independence, “it makes movie-going more enjoyable for individuals who are hard of hearing, hearing impaired, sight impaired or blind.”

Independent Lifestyles’ Advocates for Independence Committee includes staff, consumers, and community members who join together to support each other in their self-advocacy efforts as well as addressing disability issues in the community.

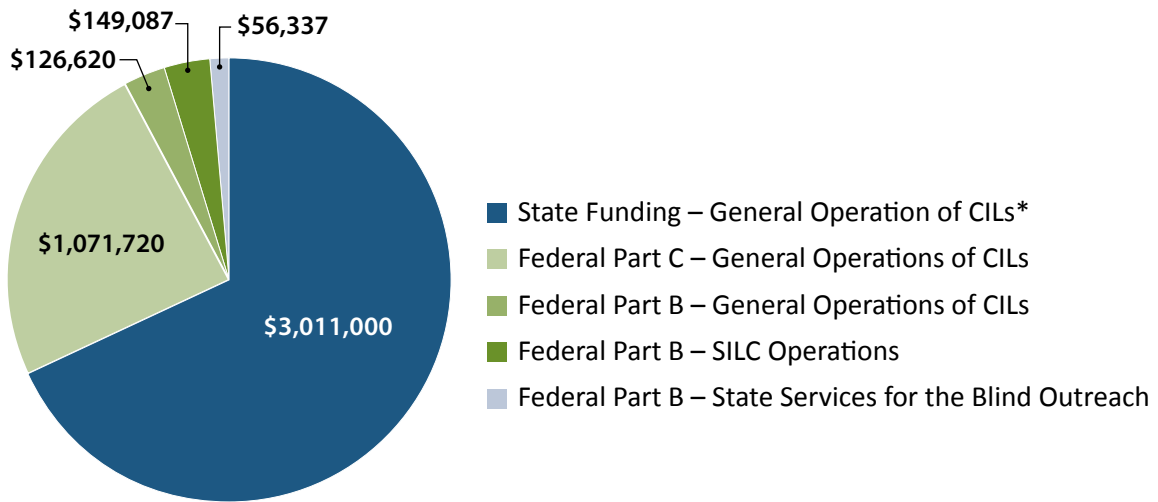
The Advocates for Independence Committee meets the first and third Wednesdays of every month from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Meetings are held at Independent Lifestyles, although meetings may be held at other locations occasionally. Please contact Val at 320-529-9000 for more information.

Watch the MNSILC website for an announcement regarding nominations for 2019.



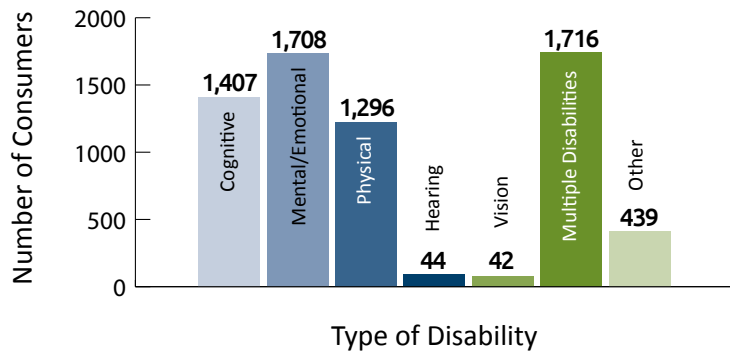
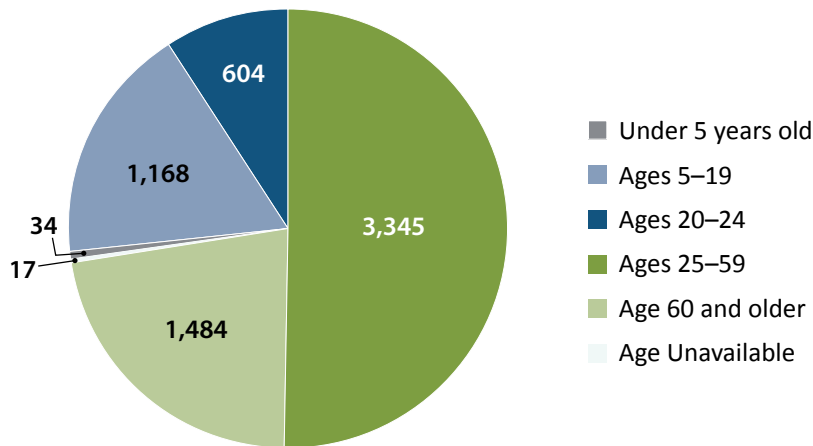
*Left to right Bev Joyce, (Advocates for Independence Chair)  
Joe Cordie (Marcus Parkwood Cinema Manager) holding a  
certificate and Amanda Semega (Advocates for Independence  
Member) standing in front of a theater mural.*

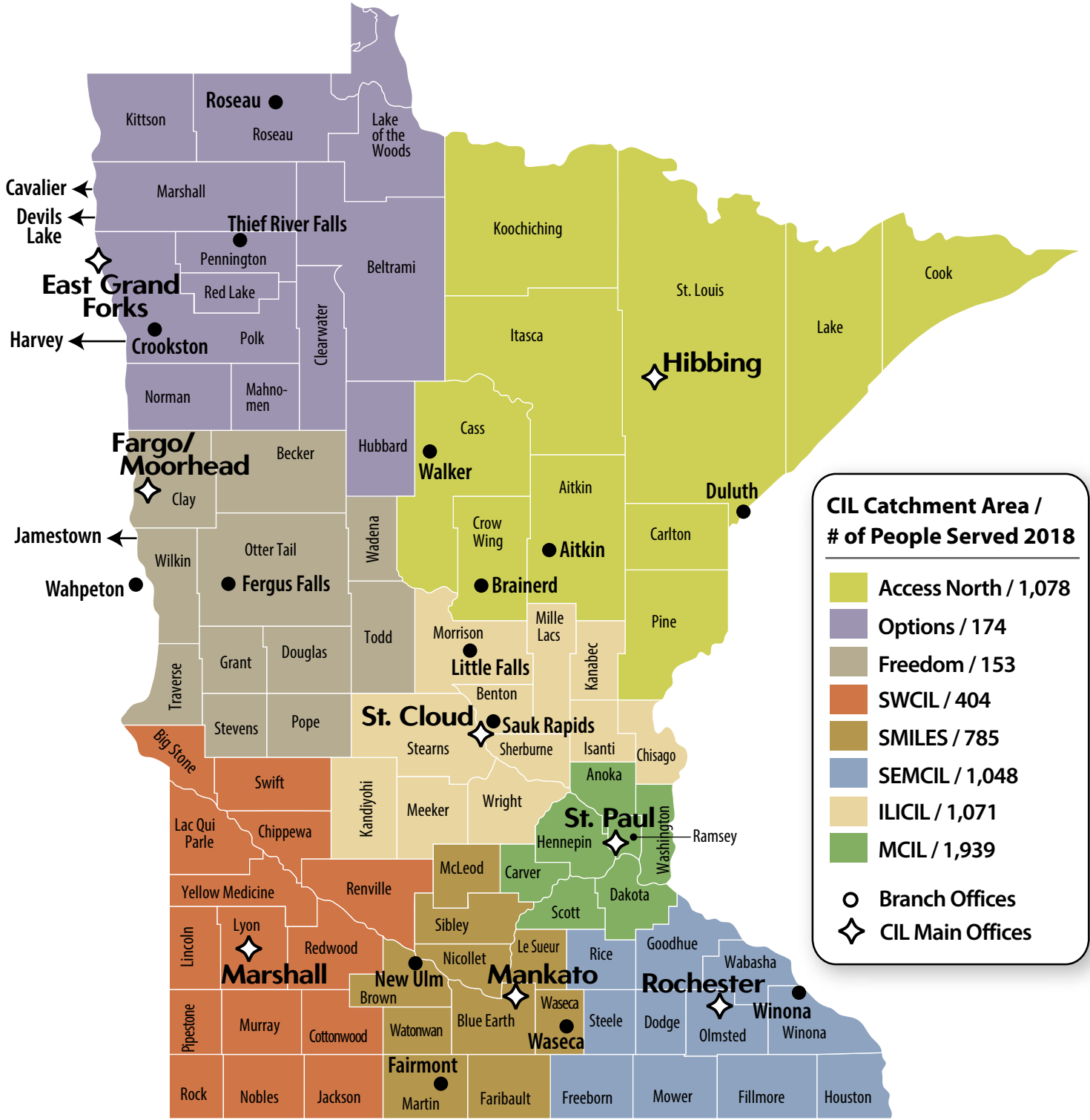
### Independent Living Funding Distribution



### Total Number of People Served by Centers for Independent Living

In FFY 2018, 6,652 individuals were served by Minnesota’s eight CILs which provided a total 57,834 received services, including the Independent Living (IL) core services.





MNSILC has worked collaboratively with many partners. Working together to improve the ability of Minnesotans with disabilities to live independently benefits our entire community.

The following were instrumental in the work done by this council:

- Access North Center for Independent Living
- FREEDOM Resource Center for Independent Living
- Independent Lifestyles, Inc. - A Center for Independent Living
- Metropolitan Center for Independent Living
- OPTIONS Interstate Resource Center for Independent Living
- Southern Minnesota Independent Living Enterprises and Services
- Southeast Center for Independent Living
- Southwestern Center for Independent Living
- Department of Employment and Economic Development
  - Vocational Rehabilitation Services
  - State Services for the Blind
- Minnesota Council on Disabilities
- State Rehabilitation Council-General
- State Rehabilitation Council-Blind
- Olmstead Implementation Office



For more information about the Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council or to request an alternative format go to: [mn.gov/deed/silc](http://mn.gov/deed/silc) or [mnsilc1215@gmail.com](mailto:mnsilc1215@gmail.com) or call: Jo Erbes, Coordinator at **612-518-1487** or **MN Relay at 711**.