

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



318 3rd St NW
East Grand Forks, MN 56721
218- 773-6100 V/TTY
800-726-3692

Options: Interstate Resource Center for Independent Living Volume XXVII, No. 1, Fall 2017

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Welcome to Options: RCIL

Options Resource Center for Independent Living has expanded. We have new staff and in addition, a new office. But first, let's summarize our services.

As our mission states, we are committed to assisting individuals with disabilities to live independently in the communities of their choice and to eliminate barriers of attitude, architecture and communication.

Among the core services we provide:

Information and Referral—We can point you to the direction you need to go, by identifying the services and resources you need in order to live independently.

Independent Living Skills Training — One to one direct service based on what a person needs to become and remain independent.

Transition Services — We support and empower people with disabilities to transition into adulthood. Options also assists individuals to transition from institutional settings into communities of their choice.

Individual and Systems Advocacy — Individual advocacy assists people with disabilities in safe-guarding their civil rights. Systems advocacy supports critical issues which are based on community needs as defined by consumers.

Peer Visiting — Persons with disabilities, who have been there, develop supportive relationships with other people who have disabilities. Options assists support groups with information and technical assistance to foster peer relationships.

WELCOME TO OPTIONS: Continued on next page

Welcome to Options: Continued

Community Education and Outreach — Options provides many different presentations, including legal rights, architectural accessibility, attitudinal barriers, and information regarding other disability rights

Equipment Loan — Options has a wide variety of adaptive equipment to use free of charge. We

Options Expands

Options: RCIL now has an office in Bemidji, Minnesota. While Jessie Smith, an Independent Living Specialist of ours, has served the area (Beltrami, Hubbard, Clearwater, Mahnomen and west Polk County) for some time, it is the first time we have an office there at 403 4th St NW Suite 235. The office is manned by Jessie and our new Employee Rights Specialist, Randi Su Tanem.

Two New Minnesota Initiatives and Employees



Randi Su Tanem—
Employee Rights Specialist
RandiSu Tanem is the Employment Rights Specialist. She provides information to person with disabilities working in subminimum wage jobs about

opportunities to work in integrated settings with competitive wages.

Amanda Carlson—Benefits Specialist



Amanda Carlson is the Benefits Specialist. She is working to assist people to better understand their Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Housing and other benefits as they consider returning to or seeking employment.

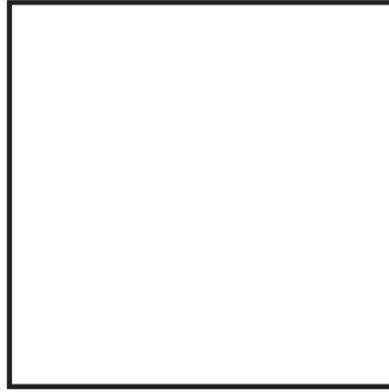
New Employees

Jamie Milling — Independent Living Specialist



Jamie is our new IL Specialist serving south Grand Forks county, Steele and Traill counties. She will be happy to sit down with you and discuss how you can remain independent in your community, navigate the system and more.

Marcia Schneider — Independent Living Specialist



Marcia is our new IL Specialist in Harvey, ND. She brings lots of experience working for people with disabilities. She serves Wells, Eddy, Foster and Griggs counties.

Moves

Tami S Staven — Independent Living Specialist
Tami has been with Options for many years, serving as IL Specialist in Grand Forks. She has now moved to serve you out of the Cavalier, ND office. She serves Pembina, Cavalier, Walsh and north Grand Forks counties.

Heather Everson — Advocate and Trainer
After serving in Harvey as an IL Specialist for a few years, Heather is now our Advocate and Trainer. She is able to bring presentations to your community on several different topics, and also advocates on individual and system levels.

If you have any questions, or are just unsure where to go, please give us a call. We are here to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities and keep them remaining independent. We want you to be in control of your life and your choices.

Reduced-Fee ID Card in Minnesota

Minnesota offers a reduced-fee ID card to anyone who may have a developmental, physical or mental disability as defined by Minnesota statutes. These are not driver licenses but regular state ID's. The cost is 50

cents. You can find the form, "Eligibility Verification for Reduced Fee ID Card" online or call 651-297-3298. The form also includes sections for verification of your disability to be signed by a MD or case manager. You can also contact us at Options and we can also get you a form. In North Dakota, getting an ID card costs \$8.00 and there is no reduced fee.



Image shows a sample Minnesota Identification Card.

SUPPORT GROUPS



Image shows illustration of group meeting at a table.

Grand Forks

Mental Health Challenges

Where: Valley Square Memorial Home

When: 2nd Tuesday, 7pm

Contact: Lois

lois.namigf@gmail.com

(701) 746-5380

Parents of Those with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

Where: The Arc Upper Valley

When: 2nd Tuesday, 6:30pm

Contact: Rachel, 701-772-6191

Brain Injury

When: Last Tuesday, 7:30pm

Where: Sharon Lutheran Church

Contact: Rebecca,

701-777-5200 or

rebecca.quinn@med.und.edu

Schizophrenia Anonymous

When: Every Wednesday, 7pm

Where: Prairie Harvest

Contact:

Support Groups at Grand Forks Senior Center—Garden Room:

Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregiver

When: 3rd Thursday, 10:00am

Contact: Lynn McGarry at

701-757-4877 or

LMcgarry@gfseniorcenter.org

Diabetes/Pre-Diabetes

When: 2nd Tuesday, 10:00am

Contact: Ranea Johnson at

701-757-4866 or

activity@gfseniorcenter.org

Visually Impaired Seniors

When: 2nd Tuesday, 1:00pm

Contact: Tracy Wicken at

701-795-2720

Bemidji

Living Well with Diabetes

Where: Sanford Bemidji Medical Center - Conference Room C

When: 2nd Tuesday, 6:00pm.

Contact: Suzanne Elhard,

218-333-5283

Roseau

Living Well with Chronic Conditions

Where: LifeCare Medical Center

When: Mondays 6:30 pm

Contact: Colleen Klamar,

218-463-4751

Devils Lake

Brain Injury

When: 2nd Thursday, 5:30pm

Where: St. Olaf Church

Contact: Nicole, 701-317-4172,

Nicole.livedalen@med.und.edu

Contact: Colleen Klamar,

218-463-4751

For more support group listings, give Options a call at 218-773-6100

SWAP SHOP - ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT



Image shows a man getting off a lift chair.

FOR SALE:

2002 Chevy Venture, made fully wheelchair accessible. In good condition, complete with ramp. 218-689-0544

Rascal Mobility Lift, can lift a power wheelchair or scooter on a van, car or truck. Gary, 701-740-1806

Extra Wide Power Wheelchair, Invacare extra wide power wheelchair, hardly used. batteries are bad, but comes with charger. \$1,000 or best offer.

Seat for Scooter/Wheelchair, Large Power Wheelchair Seat, make an offer, Jerome in Grand Forks. Jerome, 218-230-4876

Blue Pride Electric Wheelchair, Blue pride electric wheelchair 9 or 10 years old, recently serviced, swivel seat, new parts. \$1,000 or best offer. located in Grand Forks. 612-423-4759

Complete Stair Lift Set - with chair, covers 12 steps, remote. Very nice. Make offer. Out of Amenia, ND. Call 701-347-5512.

2015 Golden Rite Black/Red 3 Wheel Scooter bought in November 2015, has basket. used only 1 hour \$1200 or best offer. Call Judy 701-331-0267

Red Pride 4 Wheel Scooter, like new. \$395. Comes with Scooter Cover. Gary, 701-740-1806

Metal Shower Chair, 3 years old, swivel seat to maneuver depending on direction \$70, 701-757-1947

Manual Van Ramp, approx. 9 feet. \$400. Needs to be bolted down, very new. Gary, 701-740-1806

More listings can be found at www.myoptions.info/swapshop. Options also loans out durable medical equipment to people who may need a wheelchair, walkers, etc. If you have equipment you are no longer using, consider donating to Options. Items of need include wheelchairs, rollators and bath chairs.. Call 218-773-6100 for more

Guest Editorial: From Where I Sit



Guest Editorial
by Nate Aalgaard

The Independent Living program is under attack. On a nationwide conference call August 7, advocates from around the country spoke passionately about how Federal funding helps provide valuable services to people with disabilities

and supports the work of Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILC.) The issue at hand is a proposal in the President's 2018 budget that would combine state grants for Independent Living, Developmental Disabilities, and Brain Injury services into one entity. Total funding would be \$47 million nationwide. That would be \$57 million less than the current funding for all three programs. It is being billed as innovation and efficiency, but the Independent Living advocates were not buying it.

So instead of answering the prearranged questions about how this program would work, the speakers talked about all that Independent Living does and why it is unique.

First, Independent Living has a unique set of services built around the concept of consumer control. It started as a self-help movement of people with severe disabilities trying to get into the mainstream of American life. The bedrock of Independent Living is advocacy – demanding equality in services, programs, and access to the community. It includes Independent Living skills training, so people can learn how to be independent in their homes and community. It involves information and

referral for everyone; regarding disability programs, laws, and services. Peer mentoring is a key part of Independent Living. It is one person sharing their life experiences and listening to another, helping the person achieve their goals.

Second, Centers for Independent Living (CIL's) are unique in that the majority of the board of directors must have significant disabilities. A majority of the staff must have disabilities, so they can relate to those who come to the organization for services. This feature helps ensure that Centers are indeed independent entities, and not controlled by professionals or bureaucrats. People with disabilities know best what they need. They need to be able to take the risk involved in their decisions and live with the consequences. Independent Living is not about keeping people safe. It's about giving people an equal opportunity to make meaningful choices about how they live.

A few years ago, advocates worked to get the Independent Living program moved out of the Department of Education and into a new department called Administration for Community Living (ACL.) They felt this would better suit their priorities. Now, the very agency they were hopeful for has been charged with dismantling a significant portion of it. Statewide Independent Living councils oversee the program in each state. They grant funds to CIL's, and offer perspective on the needs of people with disabilities in underserved areas. Combining these programs would be a huge setback for the program that desperately needs to grow, not shrink.

Nathan is the Executive Director of Freedom Resource Center in Fargo, ND.

Reprinted with Permission.

Medicare Updates

Medicare Enrollment Period

The Medicare Part D (medications) open-enrollment period is October 15, 2017 to December 7, 2017. Please don't forget to review your current drug plan and see if you need to change anything. If you need assistance please call Options.

New Medicare Cards

Starting in April 2018 to April 2019 Medicare will start sending out new ID cards. The new cards will have a Medicare number on it instead of your Social Security number. The reasons for this is to help reduce identify theft, and illegal use of Medicare benefits.

In regards to your new card, you don't need to take any action in getting your card. The new cards will not change your Medicare coverage or benefits. Please know that Medicare will never ask you to give personal or private information to get your new Medicare number and card.

Scams

There are several scams out there these days and we all need to be aware of them. One of the scams is with Medicare. Individuals will claim that they are with Medicare will request your Medicare number as well as other personal information. Some examples are as follows: Ask you to confirm your Medicare or Social Security number so they can send you a new card.

(Medicare will automatically send you a new card.)

Telling you there's a charge for your new card and they need to verify your personal information. **(There is no charge for your new card.)**

Threatening to cancel your health benefits if you don't share your Medicare number or other personal information **(Not true).**

If someone contacts you and asks you for your Medicare number or other personal information, hang up and call Medicare at 800-633-4227, immediately.

Disability Resource Websites for Minnesota and North Dakota

Minnesota:

Disability Linkage Line (DLL) is now Disability Hub MN on the phone and, for the first time, online.

Disability Hub MN is a free statewide resource network that helps people with disabilities solve problems, navigate the system and plan for the future. Since launching in 2006, DLL has evolved to offer more tools and services to make it easier for people with disabilities to live their best life, their way — a true "hub" of support.

With the new name comes:

- A stronger focus on person-centered principles
- Easier discovery of resources, options and tools
- More opportunities for communication and engagement

To chat with options counselors, connect to planning tools and to find other helpful information and resources, visit disabilityhubmn.org. Here, you'll find additional resources for professionals on topics such as work, housing and benefits.

Phone: 866-333-2466

Website: disabilityhubmn.org



Dakota:

On the North Dakota side, we have the same service titled "Aging and Disability Resource LINK."

The Aging and Disability Resource-LINK connects older adults and people with disabilities to care options that can help them live as independently as possible and maintain their quality of life.

Caregivers, family members, professionals and others are encouraged to explore this website or contact the Resource-LINK to see what services and supports are available in their community.

The Resource-LINK services are free, confidential and provided by the North Dakota Department of Human Services.

ND Relay TTY 1-800-366-6888
Monday through Friday, 8am - 5pm
carechoice@nd.gov

Phone: 855-462-5465

Website: carechoice.nd.assistguide.net



Feel free to submit your favorite recipe

Burritos with Gravy

- 1 ½ lb. hamburger
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 1 package taco seasoning
- Brown Hamburger and onion
- Add: taco mix as directed and simmer

For gravy combine:

- 1 can chili – no beans
- 1 can cheddar cheese soup
- 1 bottle taco hot sauce
- 1 small can diced green chili's

Fill flour tortillas with taco meat – roll up and top with gravy and shredded cheese.

You may also want to add: refried beans, chopped lettuce, salsa, sour cream, more shredded cheese to your liking.



Starkey Hearing Foundation Provides Free Hearing Aids



Starkey Hearing Foundation, which is a part of Starkey Hearing Technologies out of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, can provide free hearing aids as part of their "Hear Now" program. If your income is limited to \$1,980 or below each month, this program may be for you. Every applicant is asked to call 800-328-8602 and ask for Hear Now to discuss their eligibility. The



Image shows a set of Starkey hearing aids.

hearing aids they provide are brand new and come with a 3-year warranty. They do ask for a \$125.00 per hearing aid applicant fee; however, if it is determined you are not eligible, that money will be refunded. Along with the application you will need to find a local audiologist to get a hearing test and audiogram. This is a national program, both Minnesota and North Dakota residents are eligible.

What Are Powers of Attorney?

Do you have a friend or a loved one who is in need of some assistance with their financial affairs?

It can be as easy as appointing a person a Power of Attorney over financial matters. A "Power of Attorney" is a written document often used when a person wants another adult to manage or handle their financial or property matters. A Power of Attorney is a legal form, however it is NOT a court document. The courts generally are not involved with Power of Attorney, but if someone becomes incapacitated or unable to make decisions on their own, the court may get involved to order a legal guardian or a conservatorship for the incapacitated person.

You can download POA forms from the internet.

A person who creates a POA document is called the "Principal." (person giving the power). The person that will take care of things for you is called the "attorney-in-fact." This person does not have to be a lawyer. They are also NOT your guardian. If you get a POA for financial assistance over matters, you do not lose your right to make decisions on how to spend your money.

You can revoke (take back) the Power of Attorney at any time. If you wish to revoke a Power of Attorney, you must put this in writing that you are revoking the POA, sign and date this in front of a notary. Send copies to the POA and to any place of business where your POA was conducting any financial affairs for you. If you need a Power of Attorney, it is important to choose someone you trust, as they will have control of your bank accounts and or property.

What is a "Durable Power of Attorney?"

"Durable means lasting. If you have a Power of Attorney managing your affairs and you become incapacitated or mentally incompetent, the Power of Attorney you have appointed is no longer valid. Unless you write your Power of Attorney papers stating you want them to continue to be your POA even if you become incapacitated. Then it is called a "Durable Power of Attorney." If a person agrees to be your Durable Power of Attorney, this can only end through a judge appointing you a conservator.

It is wise to give a copy of your Power of Attorney contract to your bank. You should also request to see a copy of your financial records regularly; preferably on a monthly basis to ensure your POA is only assisting you with paying your bills and other financial affairs as needed for you.

Some elderly persons think it is a good idea to have someone else's name on their bank accounts in case they become incapacitated or mentally incompetent so that person can manage their financial affairs. However when you put a joint owner on your account, this could become problematic in some instances, such as a divorce, or a bankruptcy that person may go through, or battling debts with creditors. This is why appointing a person as your Power of Attorney, only allows them to act on your behalf in your own financial matters. It does not give them authority to use your money or assets to pay their own debts.

To avoid probate upon your death, you can list one or more people on your accounts as beneficiaries so they will automatically own the account upon your death. The beneficiary does not have control of your account while you are alive. You may rename your beneficiary at any time while you have the capacity to do so.

If a person wishes write or to revoke a Power of Attorney there are forms online to assist with that.

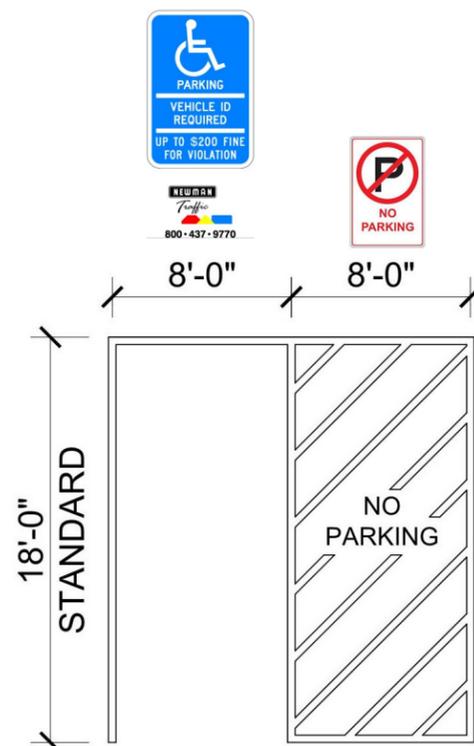
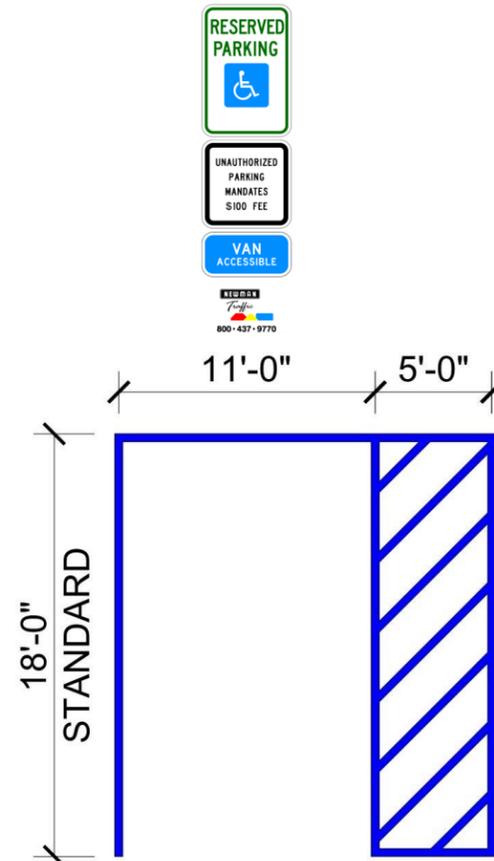
Accessible Parking Updates

What is an accessible parking space supposed to look like?

In 1991 the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) required accessible off street parking for businesses and most public and private organizations. These requirements were updated in 2012, with the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design providing parking lot stripers guidance on how big the accessible parking space and access aisle need to be, how many spaces are required and what the signs have to include.

Each state added a few additional requirements. In North Dakota the sign has to say Reserved Parking and the fine sign has to say Unauthorized Parking Mandates \$100 Fee. Blue paint has to be used to designate the parking space. For each six required accessible parking spaces, one has to be van accessible with either an 11-foot wide parking space and 5-foot access aisle or an 8-foot wide parking space and 8-foot wide access aisle. Additional accessible parking spaces not required to be van accessible are only required to be 8-foot wide with a 5-foot access aisle.

In Minnesota all accessible parking spaces are required to be 8-foot wide and all access aisles are required to be 8-foot wide. The color of the spaces are not designated but mostly they are painted with blue paint with some yellow and white seen in the state. In addition to the accessible parking space signage, MN requires a sign at the head of the access aisle noting no parking in the access aisle, unless the space is inside a covered parking garage and then the no parking signage can be painted on the surface of the access aisle.



Please Don't Block the Access Aisle

What do you call the usually blue hash marked area next to the accessible parking space and what is it for? That is the required access aisle and provides a space for a person who uses a mobility aid enter or exit their vehicle. One of the more common complaints we receive at Options is of people parking in the access aisle and blocking the person from getting back into their vehicle. Please don't be a blocker. For more information on accessible parking design requirements please contact Options.

Top-right diagrams show Minnesota and North Dakota ADA parking requirements. Bottom illustration demonstrates how an individual uses an access aisle.

Emotional Support and Service Animals: What is the difference between a service and an emotional support animal?



Image shows a badge with the phrase, "please don't pet me, I'm working"

Service animals are used by people with disabilities for many purposes including guide dogs for people for vision impairments, hearing assist dogs, seizure response dog, psychiatric service dogs or dog which provides physical support for a person with a mobility limitation. Service animals have to be trained, either by an organization, person or self-trained. Service animals are limited to dogs only, with the exception for miniature horses. Service animals have to be on a leash, unless the service they provide requires them to be off a leash and they are not required to wear any special vest or have a certification.

Service animals can accompany a person with a disability into almost anyplace any person can go in public, including a restaurant, airplane, city bus, taxi, hotel/motel, store, physician or dental office, park, classroom both K-12 and college and any city, county, state or federal office. The only two questions a business or organizations representative can ask a person with a disability about their animal are: "Is this a service animal?" and "What task has the animal been trained to perform?" They cannot be required to perform the task. These rights are only for people with disabilities who have service animals and are guaranteed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Air Carriers Access Act along with the MN and ND Human Rights Act.

An emotional support animal is typically prescribed for a person who has a psychiatric or other mental health issue such as an anxiety or depression. To be eligible the person has to have a disability and their doctor or other mental health care professional will need to recommend the animal to help the person manage the symptoms of their disability. The animal can be a cat, dog or other animal and does not need to be trained. Sometimes, people refer to these animals as therapy or companion animals. Therapy animals are typically used by therapists though in hospital, rehabilitation or nursing home setting. An animal which only provides companionship for a person who does not have a disability may not qualify as an emotional support animal.

Emotional support animals and service animals can accompany a person into their home, apartment, condo or other living area because the Federal Fair Housing Act and North Dakota and Minnesota Human Rights Act require landlords to provide reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities. Landlords can request documentation from the person's mental health professional, but the information should only verify the person has a disability and needs the animal. Medical records including diagnosis should not be provided. Landlords cannot require a "pet deposit" for an emotional support animal or service animal. Businesses or public organizations are not required to allow emotional support animals into public places such as stores, restaurants, theaters or offices. Emotional support animals are allowed to fly with their owners on commercial aircraft under the Air Carrier Access Act but they may need to contact the airline to get preauthorization.



Image shows a service animal with a bridge handle.

Smart Speakers

There is a type of device out there in the Assistive Technology world that is raising a lot of interest for people with disabilities. It is called a "environmental control device", which allow you to control the environment by various means. These devices all you to control everything in your home by voice. This is hugely beneficial to people with a variety of disabilities. Imagine turning on all your lights by a simple command such as, "turn on the lights." Environmental Control Devices have actually been around for awhile in different formats, but this really is the first time they are coming out as personal home assistants.

Through a "smart" speaker, you can ask the software to adjust the temperature, switch the lights off and on, lock the doors, tell you sports scores, the weather, order food, make coffee, take and memorize notes, play games with you such as Jeopardy, remind you to take your medicine, and so much more.

There are three major corporations with smart speakers, along with several smaller companies. For the sake of space, we will examine the "big three": Amazon Echo, Google Home and Apple HomePod.

SMART SPEAKERS: Continued on next page

Achieving a Better Life Experience with ABLE Accounts

ABLE accounts were signed into law in 2014 to help ease the financial strains faced by individuals with disabilities. An ABLE account is a tax free savings account for individuals with disabilities. ABLE accounts will not affect an individual's eligibility for Social Security as long as they stay below \$100,000.

Eligibility for an ABLE account: Any individual with significant disabilities that meets established criteria is eligible for one ABLE account. The account may be opened at any age, but the disability must have an onset age prior to the age of 26, and the disability must still exist at the time the account is open.

If a person is receiving SSI and /or SSDI and meets the age requirement.

If a person is not receiving SSI or SSDI, they must meet Social Security's definition of a disability regarding significant functional limitations.

The total annual contributions that are allowed are \$14,000, regardless of the number of contributions.

The funds in the ABLE account can be withdrawn and used for qualified disability expenses. These qualified expenses are any expense that results from living with disabilities. This can include education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, health care expenses and any other expenses that help improve health, independence the quality of life.

*It is important to make sure and not withdraw ABLE account funds for non-qualified expenses.

If you have questions about ABLE accounts in North Dakota, you can email bnd@nd.gov or call 701-328-5880. They do not offer ABLE accounts in ND, however will provide you with a list of resources and state plans available.

If you are looking for more information on ABLE accounts in Minnesota, you can visit: <https://savewithable.com/mn/home.html>. You can apply for an ABLE account through the website.

Smart Speakers: Continued



Image shows Google Home and Amazon Echo smart speakers

Amazon Echo (\$179.99), Echo Dot (\$49.99):

Amazon Echo was the first smart speaker to hit the scene and according to BusinessInsider.com, "it employs 15,000+ different skills, ability to buy items on Amazon, support for dozens of smart home devices, and stellar audio quality." There are countless "smart home devices" that connect to Amazon Echo – everything from switches, plugs, thermostats, door locks, garage doors, vacuums, bulbs, and the list goes on. You can get the software in a few different forms: Amazon Echo (\$179.99), which is a tall, high-end speaker or Echo Dots,

which are small, flat speakers (\$49.99). You can place those at different places in your home to create a network, so-to-speak. The software Amazon uses is called Alexa- you use the phrase "Alexa" before every command. Also, Google Home offers free voice-calling.



Image shows Apple HomePod smart speaker.

Google Home (\$129.00):

Google Home has many awesome features including Chromecast capability – meaning, if you have an internet TV adapter called Chromecast (think of Roku sticks that play Netflix), telling the Google Home to play Netflix on your TV will do just that without the use of a remote. You can also make phone calls from the Google Home smart speaker.

Apple HomePod (\$349.00, releases in December):

Of the big three, Apple HomePod has not been available yet and is scheduled for release this December. You may be familiar with the name, "Siri." Siri is the personal assistant that powers the HomePod and was in the market long before Amazon's Alexa or Google Home. HomePod can do a lot of similar things Amazon and Google can, with an emphasis on music. The thing that makes Apple's product (and in general) so expensive is it's built with the highest-quality hardware. A four-inch subwoofer is embedded and the device supports multi-room audio that connects to Wi-Fi speakers from other manufacturers.

You can find these items at stores such as Best Buy, Target, Wal Mart, and also on the web at Amazon.com.

If you need any assistance with these items, give us a call.

Emergency Preparedness



Image shows a duffle-bag full of emergency supplies.

Winter storms or power outages? Are you ready for them? Do you know what to do to prepare or what to do at the time of disaster? Let us help you prepare with a list of items to get you ready and what to do.

With winter rolling around the corner what items should you have in your vehicle when traveling and what plan should you have in place?

Winter survival car kit:

Use a container with a plastic cover to store the following items:

- Small candles and matches or lighter

- Small, sharp knife & plastic spoons
- Red bandanna or cloth
- Pencil and paper
- Large plastic garbage bag
- Safety pins
- Whistle
- Snacks -Raisins in small packets; Semi-sweet chocolate in pieces for sharing; Miniature candy bars; Chewing gum; Wrapped hard candies; Food bars
- Cell phone adapter to plug into lighter
- Plastic flashlight and spare batteries Reverse batteries in the flashlight to avoid accidental switching and burnout. Warm batteries before using them. Store safety items in the passenger compartment when severe winter weather threatens in case the trunk is jammed or frozen shut.
- Booster cables
- Basic tools
- Sand, cat litter or other grit in a plastic milk carton
- Shovel
- Tow cables or chain
- Sleeping bag or blankets
- Road flares and reflectors
- Snowmobile suit and heavy boots

Make sure that your gas tank is always half full during the winter time and let anyone know about your travel plans so they have a starting point if they don't hear from you.

Indoor Winter Safety

Carbon Monoxide - The Deadly Winter Hazard Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning can happen at any time of the year, but the danger is greater during the winter when doors and windows stay closed and fireplaces, gas heaters, or other fuel burning appliances are in use. In addition, people can also be exposed to deadly CO levels when "warming up" their cars in garages or keeping them running when stuck in snow.

Please make sure that your vent pipes for your furnaces are clear from snow and ice build-up so the fumes from the gas do not build up within your home.

To read more about emergency preparedness, visit our blog at Options.areavoices.com

Transition Services Available at Options

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2014 (WIOA) expanded the Independent Living core services to include three components of transition:

- Facilitate the transition of individuals with significant disabilities from nursing facilities and other institutions to home and community-based residences with coordination of supports and services.
- Provide assistance to individuals with significant disabilities who are at risk of entering institutions and continue to reside in their homes with supports and services.
- Facilitate the transition of youth who are individuals with significant disabilities who were eligible for individualized education programs (IEP's) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Individuals who have completed their secondary education or left school to postsecondary education or employment and also age 16-24 years of age.



Image shows an individual approaching a path that splits into three different directions.

Options on the Web

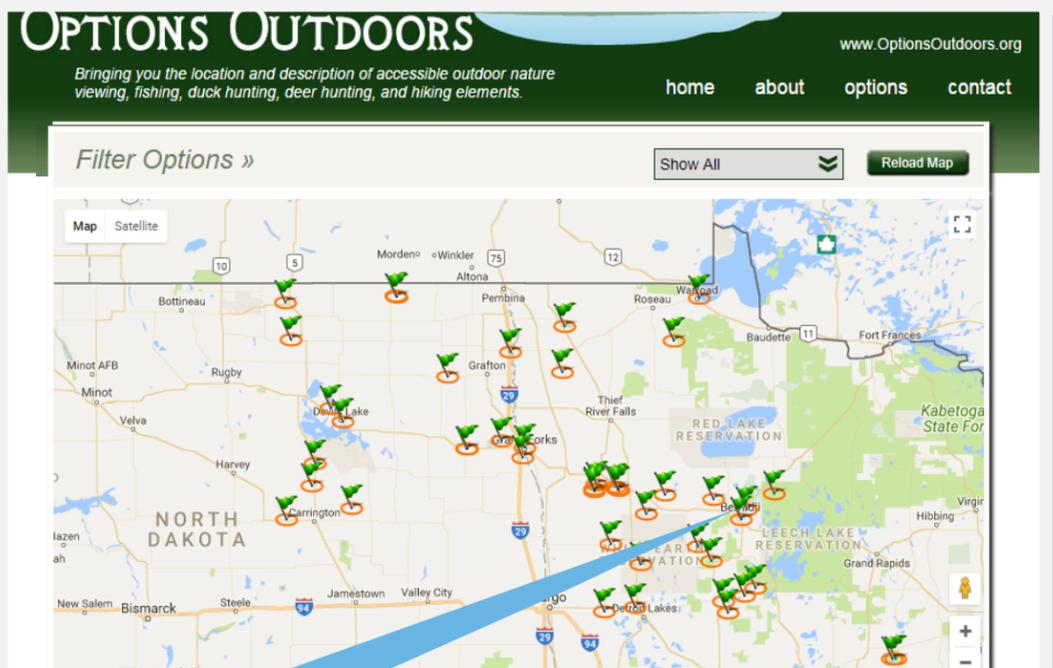
www.myoptions.info

On Options' website, you can find further explanations of our services, and perhaps answers to questions you may have to in order to find the resources you are looking for.



Options Outdoors www.optionsoutdoors.org

Optionsoutdoors.org is a website dedicated to providing information on accessible outdoor locations so people with disabilities can participate in nature watching, hiking, deer hunting, waterfowl hunting, and fishing. Each of the sites listed provides information needed for an individual with a disability to make an informed decision about access to an outdoor recreation activity.



[Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](http://www.MinnesotaDepartmentofNaturalResources.org)

Clearwater River Public Fishing Access



[Click for more info >>](#)

Options on Social Media

www.facebook.com/optionsRCIL

Visit and like our social media page on Facebook to stay up to date for anything disability-related and local events.



Options Blog, “Options, Choices, Rights”

www.options.areavoices.com

Our online blog, which is part of the Forum Communications Blog Network “AreaVoices”, is now online. Visit our blog to get the latest information on local disability news and items that may affect or benefit your life and quest for independence.





**Resource Center
for Independent Living**

318 3rd St NW
East Grand Forks, MN 56721
218-773-6100 V/TTY
800-726-3692
218-773-7119 Fax
options@myoptions.info Email

If you would like to receive Options notices and publications by email, please go to www.myoptions.info and submit your request under the CONTACT tab.

If accommodations are necessary to read this newsletter, such as audio format, braille, please contact us at **218-773-6100 or 800-726-3692** or email us at options@myoptions.info

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Options is a non-profit organization committed to assisting individuals with disabilities to live independently in the communities of their choice and to eliminate barriers of attitude, architecture and communication from the environment.

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Just Call Options!

If you have a question and need an answer feel free to "just call Options." If you are a person who:

- Acquired a disability?
- Need help with Medicare Part D?
- Do you need medical equipment?
- Know your housing rights?
- Need transition assistance?
- Do you have social security questions?

- Is your home accessible?
- Do you need assistance for your children with IEP's in school?
- Any other needs based on disability?
- Overwhelmed by paperwork?
- Need peer support?
- Learn how to prepare for emergencies?
- Ride the bus?
- Learn how to drive?
- Get into your own home?

- Use Assistive Technology?
- Find financial assistance?
- Hire a personal care attendant?
- Know benefits you're eligible for?

Give us a call or email
218-773-6100
800-726-3692
options@myoptions.info

