

# MILC RUN

## MIDSTATE INDEPENDENT LIVING CHOICES

*“Working for persons with disabilities towards empowerment to make informed choices.”*



# Independent Living Council

O F W I S C O N S I N

ILCW is Wisconsin’s State Council on Independent Living. ILCW members are from everywhere in Wisconsin. Most members have disabilities, and are caregivers, family members, and/or advocates for persons with disabilities.

ILCW’s main job is making a State Plan for Independent Living. The State Plan is like a road map for Independent Living. The plan sets goals for the ILCs and their partners. It directs state and federal funding. Most importantly, the State Plan explains what persons with disabilities in Wisconsin need so they can live independently. The SPIL is a very important document, and it takes a lot of work to get it right.

When ILCW is not working on writing the plan, it is busy making sure everything in the plan is going well. If something isn’t working, ILCW can change the Plan’s goals or offer advice. When everything is going well with the State Plan, ILCW is always busy meeting people and talking to community and state leaders about Independent Living. ILCW isn’t “in charge.” It is there to make sure the lives of disabled Wisconsinites are getting little better every day.

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# ILCW (cont.)

Right now, ILCW and its partners are working on amending the current plan. To get a head start, the next plan, which will go into effect on October 1st, 2024, is being developed. The State Plan isn't only for ILCs or for ILCW, it is for everyone. To get it right, ILCW needs to hear from everyone in Wisconsin, especially persons with disabilities, caretakers, family members, and advocates.

All ILCW meetings are open to the public, and anyone who is interested is more than welcome to attend. Every meeting has time set aside for comments about the State Plan or Independent Living in Wisconsin. Joining meetings is also a great way to learn more about ILCW and Independent Living.

Everyone is welcome, and encouraged, to fill out the [SPIL Priorities Survey](https://forms.gle/6MVC7RRHQHYuRYKe6). The survey gives ILCW information about what people across the state need in the next State Plan. Filling out the survey only takes about five minutes. It is available online at <https://forms.gle/6MVC7RRHQHYuRYKe6>.

The [Wisconsin Independent Living Network website](https://il-wis.net) is also a good place to find out about Independent Living in Wisconsin. Meeting times and agendas are posted on the site, as well as other events and activities across the state. There is also contact information for all 8 ILCs, the ILC's coalition, and ILCW. The address for the WILN website is <https://il-wis.net>.

ILCW can always be contacted directly. The number to text or call ILCW's Program Coordinator, Tyler Wilcox, is (608) 575-9293. He can also be emailed at [ilcwcoordinator@il-wis.net](mailto:ilcwcoordinator@il-wis.net). Tyler can also help anyone join the council if they are interested. Messages for the full council can be sent to Tyler or [ilcwinfo@gmail.com](mailto:ilcwinfo@gmail.com).

~ Tyler Wilcox, ILCW Program Coordinator

## SAVE THE DATES!

### ACCESSIBLE ICE SKATING

MARCH 11TH 2023  
12-2PM  
K.B WILLETT  
ICE ARENA  
STEVENS POINT



### ACCESSIBLE KAYAKING



JULY 29 2023  
10AM-3PM  
NEPCO LAKE  
PARK  
WISCONSIN RAPIDS

Watch [www.milc-inc.org](http://www.milc-inc.org) along with  
our facebook page for more details

# IMMEDIATE OPENINGS!

Variety of shifts! Positions available throughout our  
11 county service area!

Great  
opportunity to earn  
extra income!

**Midstate Independent Living Choices**



is in search of **CAREGIVERS** interested in assisting individuals in their homes providing personal, supportive and/or respite care. Travel allowance for eligible cases/employees. Experience preferred, or willing to learn new skills.

To see a full listing of our current openings visit

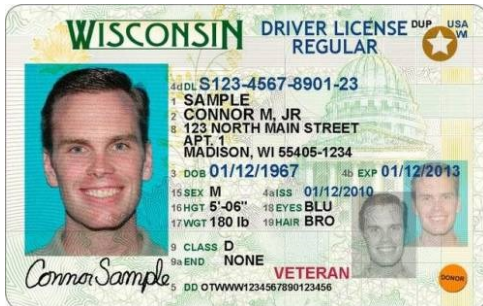
[www.milc-inc.org](http://www.milc-inc.org)

Complete the application online and submit to

[ebuckles@milc-inc.org](mailto:ebuckles@milc-inc.org) or

call 715-344-4210, ext. 222 to request an application

# Invisible Disability



Since January 1, 2019, individuals have been able to have it in their Wisconsin driver's license, identification (ID) card and/or vehicle registration record that they have an invisible disability, meaning that your disability may not be immediately apparent to another person.

Individuals can simply fill out a form, linked below, and their digital record will indicate that they do have a disability that may not be immediately apparent to others.

If there comes a time that an individual no longer wants/needs to make this known to others, another Invisible Disability Disclosure form can be filled out indicating that one wishes to have that classification removed from their record.

The completed form can either be sent to the Wisconsin DMV at the address in the upper right hand corner of the form or brought to the local Wisconsin DMV service center.

<https://wisconsin.gov/Documents/formdocs/mv2167.docx>

~ Karalyn Peterson, Resource Coordinator

# Behind the Scenes: Accessibility at the Polls



Was the polling place inaccessible for you when you went to vote on November 8<sup>th</sup>? Did you request assistance and not have your accessibility needs met? Midstate Independent Living Choices works with the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) to conduct polling site accessibility assessments during the Election Day. This is in an effort to increase polling site accessibility to guarantee voters with disabilities can actually access the polls and have an accessible way to vote. The county that is chosen to be assessed is based on how long ago the last assessment was

completed and if any voters filed accessibility concerns for specific places. Filing these concerns is incredibly important because it alerts the WEC to reach out to the county clerk and make sure the next election is accessible for voters with disabilities.

Some examples of accessibility concerns could be: the only way to access the polling place is an entrance with 3 steps, you requested curbside voting ahead of time but was not allowed to vote this way, or you requested to use the accessible voting equipment but no one knew how to actually use it and you ended up not voting. These examples are a few of many accessibility issues that voters with disabilities can face when accessing the polls. If you or someone you know has experienced an accessibility issue when accessing the polls and would like to report it to the WEC to lead to resolution please go to <https://elections.wi.gov/form/report-an-accessibility-concern> and file a concern form.

If you'd like to request assistance with completing this form, reach out to us at 715-344-4210. Remember your vote matters and voters with disabilities have a right to vote!

*~Madison Matijevich, IL Consultant*

# New Staff



My name is Kent Henderson, and I am the newest member of our Independent living consultant team with a focus on youth and transition. I have been in the U.S. Army Reserves since 2016 as an Ammunition Specialist, and plan to continue my military career, alongside my civilian career. This past summer I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Psychology from UW-Stevens Point. Upon graduation, I decided to employ my experience and

knowledge in the workforce. I am excited to implement my Psychology and leadership background and make an impact on the youth of our region.

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With my position comes teaching opportunities through five classes offered here at MILC designed to help youth/persons with disabilities to better understand foundational topics such as Dollars and Sense, a curriculum in easy-to-understand language designed to teach financial literacy skills. Additionally, I am here to help support youth in becoming more independent, whether that means moving from their parents' home into their own home, supporting going to or returning to school, and connecting them to resources that can further their independence.

If interested in learning more about our services and available curriculum, please contact me at [khenderson@milc-inc.org](mailto:khenderson@milc-inc.org) or 715-344-4210 ext. 211.

## Donations

We accept donations of gently used equipment that you are no longer in need of or using. The equipment is cleaned, sanitized, and added to our loan program for individuals to borrow for zero cost. If we find someone in need for that item, we then donate it to that individual. Below is a list of items that are commonly accepted and items we do not accept. This is not an all-encompassing list of items that are accepted. If you have an item that is not on the lists below, please feel free to contact us.

### Commonly accepted:

- Manual wheelchairs
- Walkers
- Commodes
- Toilet seat risers
- Bed rails
- Portable ramps

### Items not accepted:

- Powered wheelchairs
- Hospital beds
- Personal medical equipment/medications such as diapers, bed liners, etc.
- Specialized medical equipment (leg pumps, etc.)



If you have equipment that you are looking to donate, please reach out to Alex Lena, Independent Living Consultant at ext. 232 or Eric Riskus, IL Program Director at ext. 238.

\*Please note: Acceptance of equipment is not guaranteed and is at the discretion of MILC staff. MILC staff will request pictures or request to set up a time to view the equipment before determining if they will accept it. We request that the equipment is clean, all parts are present and in good working condition. For items not accepted such as powered wheelchairs and hospital beds, we can take your information and if we find someone in need, we can share your information (with consent) to get connected.

# Assistive Technology Review At MILC:



Most individuals strive to be as independent as possible. This is true for individuals both with and without disabilities. However, it can be difficult for those caring for an individual with a disability to allow them to be as independent as possible due to being nervous or scared about their well-being, especially if they wish to live on their own. While these feelings are valid and may never fully go away, there are some pieces of technology that can help in reducing some of these feelings. Also, there is technology to support that individual with the disability to be as independent as possible.

One piece of technology is the Amazon Echo Show. There are a number of features that can support an individual with a disability as well as give some peace of mind to family members and loved ones. With an Echo Show, an individual with a disability can use it to set alarms for getting up in the morning, set reminders for tasks such as taking medicine, they can check the weather so they can choose appropriate seasonal clothing for the day, ask questions about sporting events, if stores are open, etc.

There is also a feature called “show and tell”. This allows an individual with vision loss to ask “Alexa, what am I holding?”. The Show will use the front facing camera to take a picture of what the person is holding. If it is able to identify the item, the Show will speak the name of the item. The Show will also give audible cues to help the individual get the item in frame. This works well if someone is having difficulties identifying ingredients for cooking (canned/boxed foods, etc.).

Another feature is called “drop-in”. This allows a family member to check-in with someone to see how things are going. As long as the device within the home has this feature turned on, a family member/loved one can use their Amazon app to drop-in. This does not require someone answering a call so it can be helpful if someone struggles using the phone or if they take a long time to get to a phone. This can offer some peace of mind to family members and loved ones without needing them to drive over to the individual’s home every day. The Echo Show can also be more cost effective than a whole home monitoring system.

There are more Echo Show features that can assist an individual with a disability to become and/or remain as independent as possible. If you are interested in seeing this device in action or want to learn more about it and its features, please contact us and ask to speak to an Independent Living Consultant.

*~ Alex Lena, IL Consultant*

# LOAN PROGRAMS

## What is Wisloan?

Wisloan is a statewide, alternative loan program that allows Wisconsin residents with a disability, or their families, to purchase adaptive equipment, assistive technology or modify their homes so that they can live more independently. The applicant must be 18 and a resident of Wisconsin who wishes to improve his or her quality of life through the acquisition of items (examples include assistive technology, modified vehicles, etc.).

**Both Telework and Wisloan** loan amounts will depend on the item being purchased and the ability to repay. The current interest rate is 6.5%.

Bad credit, including bankruptcy is not a reason to not apply. The focus is on the ability to make the monthly payments. Reasons for credit issues are taken into consideration by the review board. Contact an IL Consultant at the MILC office for assistance in completing an application.

## What is Telework?

Telework is a statewide, alternative loan program allowing Wisconsin residents with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment needed to work from remote sites away from the office, including at home, on the road or at a Telework center. In addition to the purchase of equipment, the loan funds can be used for training to use equipment, extended warranties, the cost of maintenance and repair.

## What is TEPP?

### **Telecommunications, Equipment Purchase Program**

If you are one of the millions of people who have difficulty using a telephone, you should know that help is available through the Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Program, or TEPP. The TEPP Program provides funding, (through the Universal Service Fund), for people with disabilities to purchase specialized telephones and related equipment.

The TEPP program issues vouchers, each with different dollar amounts, based on several categories of disability. For example, the Hard of Hearing voucher is \$100, the Deaf/Severely Hard of Hearing voucher is \$800, and the Mobility Impaired voucher is \$1,600. (Vouchers over \$100 require a \$100 co-pay, but there are programs available that may help cover that cost).

If you don't know what kind of phone will work for you, we have several different types of phones that you can borrow from our Wistech Loan and Demonstration Program so you can 'Try before you buy'.



Please contact MILC for further information about the TEPP Program or to schedule an appointment to try a few phones. (We can also assist with the application).

**Midstate Independent Living Choices**  
**3262 Church Street**  
**Stevens Point WI 54481**

**NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION**  
**US POSTAGE PAID**  
**STEVENS POINT, WI**  
**PERMIT NO. 314**

**Electronic Service Requested**

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**How To Get a Hold of Us:**

Midstate Independent Living Choices  
3262 Church Street  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
715-344-4210 or 800-382-8484  
milc@milc-inc.org or www.milc-inc.org

Newsletter Editor: Jennifer Strike: I&R Specialist

**To contact the following departments dial:**

Mental Health/Peer Support: Ext. 243  
IL Program: Ext. 238  
PAS Program: Ext. 224  
Human Resources: Ext. 226  
Accounting: Ext. 214

**MOVING?**  
**Let us know so we can keep**  
**you on our mailing list.**  
**Contact us at milc@milc-inc.org**



**WisTech**  
Assistive  
Technology Program  
Partially Supported by Wistech,  
Wisconsin's State Assistive Technology Program



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