



A faded, grayscale image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes, serves as a background for the top half of the page.

## What is Independent Living?

Independent Living isn't defined by where a person lives, where they are employed, or how active they are in their community. These are all parts of how a person chooses to live independently and make the decisions that matter to them.

We believe that individuals with disabilities have the right to make their own choices about their lives, live and work in the settings they choose, and have the same rights as any other Ohioan.

Independent Living Philosophy believes that:

- Individuals with disabilities are the best experts of their own needs
- Individuals should be empowered to make their own decisions
- Individuals deserve the dignity of risk and to learn from their life experiences
- Our communities should be inclusive of all disabilities

Many of us take the small things in life for granted. We drive where we want. We live in neighborhoods of our choosing. We find employment that suits our desires. Through the work of the Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council and the Centers for Independent Living we want those same choices available to the 1.6 million people with disabilities in Ohio.

An individual should not be limited in their choices or independence because of a disability.

## What is SILC?

The Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) is a statewide, cross-disability board that is mandated by federal law. The majority of our Council is made up of individuals with significant disabilities and appointed by the Governor of Ohio. We work with the Governor to find individuals in the disability community across the state that will help provide leadership and be part of the voice that leads the Independent Living Program of Ohio.

The Ohio SILC is committed to promoting a philosophy of consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, and individual and systems advocacy to maximize leadership, empowerment, independence, productivity and to support full inclusion and integration of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of American society.

Part of our role is to coordinate the development of the State Plan for Independent Living, a three-year strategic plan that guides the services and funding for the Independent Living Program. The SILC monitors the effectiveness and progress made toward the goals of the State Plan and works with partners for the alignment of our mutual goals.

The Council meets regularly and has committees dedicated to furthering the mission of the SILC and goals of our State Plan. Through our work, we aim to promote the independence, empowerment, and inclusion of people with disabilities across the state and be a voice to represent all members of the disability community.

## What is the State Plan?

The State Plan for Independent Living is a three-year plan jointly developed by the SILC and the CILs of Ohio. This plan incorporates the input and thoughts of people with disabilities across the state to gain perspective and help direct our collective efforts.

This plan also helps direct funding for Independent Living Services for individuals and serves as a way for the Independent Living Program to identify and meet the needs of the community.

### WHAT IS COMMUNITY LIVING?

At Ohio SILC, we strive to provide individuals with disabilities – regardless of age – with the same opportunities as everyone else. They should: **Choose** where they want to live; **Choose** where they want to work; **Lead** the lives they want; and **Make decisions** about their lives.



# History of SILC

In 1993, Gov. George Voinovich signed an executive order creating the Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council, which is more commonly known as Ohio SILC. The move followed a federal mandate that each state create a Council to serve as a voice for individuals with disabilities for the Independent Living Program.

Our Council is composed of 19 members, all appointed by the governor. A majority of Council members have a significant disability and represent diverse backgrounds.

SILC leads the development of the State Plan for Independent Living, a three-year strategic plan that works toward common goals and initiatives. This plan helps guide the direction of the services and funding of programs that increase the independence of Ohioans with disabilities across the state.

We also work to coordinate with our statewide partners, including the state agencies that have members appointed to the Council. This includes Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, the Ohio Department of Transportation, and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

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**SILC plays a vital role in our society. As we seek greater inclusion and independence for Ohioans with disabilities, there is not a better organization to lead the charge than SILC.**

**– Carolyn Knight  
Executive Director,  
Ohio Developmental  
Disabilities Council**



# Centers for Independent Living



Ohio is home to 12 Centers for Independent Living (CILs). The centers are non-residential, community-based organizations run by and for individuals with disabilities. It is a statutory requirement that a majority of the board members and staff of the centers be individuals with disabilities, giving them the unique ability to provide resources and advocacy based on first-hand experience.

When individuals work with centers, it is through a model that empowers individuals to take control of their lives and decide what independence means to them. The centers do not tell individuals how to live their lives. Rather, they mentor and guide them through the process of achieving their self-identified goals. Every center provides these services:

## **INFORMATION AND REFERRAL** –

Connecting individuals to the services and supports needed in their community;

**PEER SUPPORT** – Mentoring and supporting individuals with shared experiences create empowerment and independence;

**SKILLS TRAINING** – Teaching individuals the skills needed to be more independent and have greater control over their lives;

## **SYSTEMS AND INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY**

– Preparing individuals to stand up for themselves and access the supports they need. This includes the elimination of barriers and the improvement of systems for individuals with disabilities;

**INSTITUTIONAL TRANSITION** – Assisting individuals in an institutional setting, such as a nursing facility, to transition to community-based living;

**YOUTH TRANSITION** – Assisting youth with disabilities to prepare for adult life. This can consist of education, employment, or community participation;

**DIVERSION SERVICES** – Critical services aimed at keeping individuals with disabilities from having to enter an institution and remain in the community.

# Centers for Independent Living

Ohio has 12 Centers for Independent Living that provide services to individuals with disabilities.

Centers can be contacted directly for more information on their respective services.

## THE ABILITY CENTER OF GREATER TOLEDO

419-885-5733 | [abilitycenter.org](http://abilitycenter.org)

*Counties served:*

Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Lucas, Ottawa, Williams, Woods

## LINKING EMPLOYMENT ABILITIES AND POTENTIAL (LEAP)

216-696-2716 | [leapinfo.org](http://leapinfo.org)

*Counties served:*

Cuyahoga, Erie, Geauga, Huron, Lake, Lorain, Medina

## INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER OF NORTH CENTRAL OHIO

419-526-6770 | [ilcnco.org](http://ilcnco.org)

*Counties served:*

Ashland, Crawford, Huron, Knox, Morrow, Richland

## ACCESS CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

937-341-5202 | [acils.com](http://acils.com)

*Counties served:*

Clark, Greene, Montgomery, Preble

## CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING OPTIONS

513-241-2600 | [cilo.net](http://cilo.net)

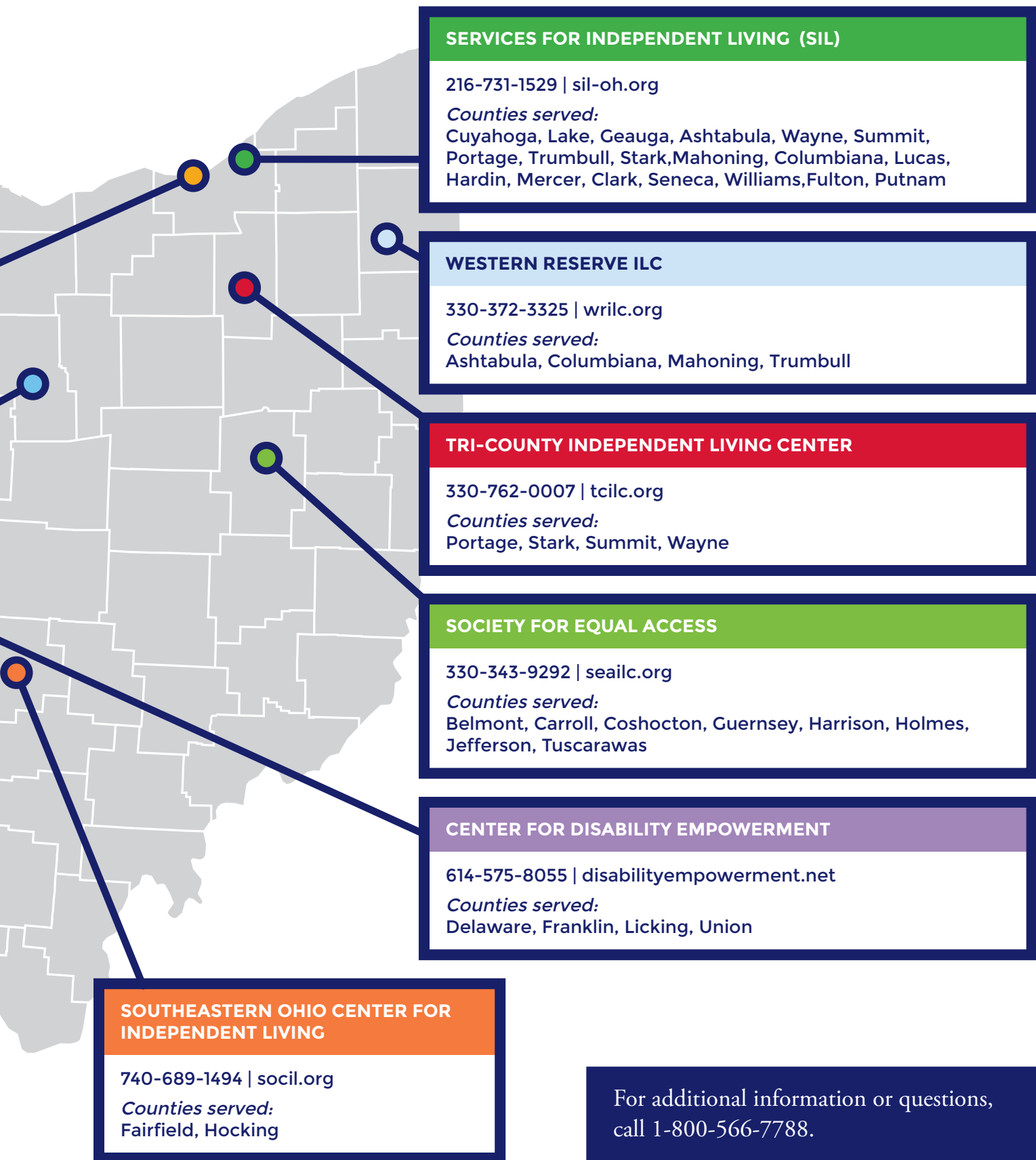
*Counties served:*

Adams, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, Highland, Warren

## MID-OHIO BOARD FOR AN INDEPENDENT LIVING ENVIRONMENT (MOBILE)

614-443-5936 | [mobileonline.com](http://mobileonline.com)

*Counties served:*  
Franklin



For additional information or questions,  
call 1-800-566-7788.



Ohio **SILC**

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[ohiosilc.org](http://ohiosilc.org)

