



Hello and Welcome!

Thank you for choosing Granite State Independent Living (GSIL) as your partner to independence. GSIL is proud to be New Hampshire's only Center for Independent Living (CIL), providing numerous programs, services, and assistance to individuals with disabilities throughout the State of New Hampshire.

At GSIL, we have been advocating the Independent Living (IL) philosophy for over 44 years and fully understand the importance of you wanting to manage your own program. Our consumer directed program offers you the flexibility to choose your employees and to manage the services they will provide for you. It allows you to schedule your employees when you need them, giving you the ability to live independently in your home, in your community. GSIL values our consumers and their right to inclusion, independence, dignity, choice, and flexibility.

This consumer-directed skills training guidebook is a comprehensive tool to manage your program. While we have tried to be as thorough as possible in creating this guidebook, we also understand there might be topics you need additional assistance with. GSIL has a full support team available to provide you with the necessary information, skills-training and assistance to allow for your program to be successful. As you know, sometimes it takes a team; we at GSIL, are here to assist as needed.

Welcome once again to your consumer directed program and thank you for choosing Granite State Independent Living, where your ability to live your life independently is our first priority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deb". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deb Ritcey, CEO

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## **About Granite State Independent Living**

44 years ago, a small group of 4 people living with disabilities sat around a kitchen table trying to figure out how to regain control of their lives. They started dreaming of an organization created with the mission of assisting individuals with disabilities - individuals like themselves. This was the seed of Granite State Independent Living (GSIL). GSIL began in 1980 as a not-for-profit organization that provides services throughout New Hampshire communities and currently serves as the only Independent Living Center in the state. GSIL's mission is to promote life with independence for people with disabilities through information & referral, advocacy, training, peer support and transitional services.

More than 51% of GSIL Board Members and employees have a disability, allowing for more involvement and the creation of opportunities for individuals with disabilities than possible at most other organizations. While a requirement under GSIL's federal funding this is a statistic GSIL is proud to have.

## **What is a Center for Independent Living (CIL)?**

An independent living center is a consumer controlled, community based, cross disability, nonresidential, nonprofit agency that is designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities. This all came about in the early 1960s when deinstitutionalization was being implemented and people with disabilities were allowed to live in community settings.

As the Independent Living philosophy took hold nationally and the Disability Rights Movement gained acceptance and political influence, a grassroots movement for a comprehensive disability rights law was implemented on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 1990, known as the Americans with Disability Act (ADA).

Known as the Father of Independent Living, Ed Roberts helped this independent living philosophy take off.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZidR5SZXxA>
- [http://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=Ed Roberts: The Father of Independent Living](http://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=Ed_Roberts:_The_Father_of_Independent_Living)

## **The Independent Living Philosophy**

The philosophy at GSIL and all CIL's across the country is for consumers to have the freedom to make choices and the ability to live in the community, it is a basic civil right that should be extended to all people, regardless of age or disability. The freedom to make choices, including mistakes, empowers people to further their involvement in their life and community.

How Does an Independent Living Center help Individuals live their lives on their terms?

It can help connect individuals to local services, assist with job searches, provide skills training on local transits routes, helps with assistive technology, peer support, Information and Referral, nursing home and student transitions, self-advocacy, housing options and much more.

## **GSIL's Mission Statement**

Granite State Independent Living is a statewide nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote quality of life with independence for people with disabilities.



At GSIL we believe in the importance of mutual **RESPECT**, and we celebrate diversity.

We believe all individuals should have **CHOICES**.

We believe in individual **EMPOWERMENT**.

We believe that all individuals have the right to define their own level of **INDEPENDENCE**. We believe in **COLLABORATION** and everything we do is done with **INTEGRITY**.

## **GSIL's Consumer Advisory Committee – Your Voice Matters!**

The Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) is a GSIL-sponsored Consumer-driven committee that serves to make recommendations and/or provide key information to improve GSIL's consumer-directed services and consumer benefits. The primary purpose of the CAC is to collaborate on improvements to GSIL Consumer Driven services to include the PCA and PCSP programs, Transportation, Education, and Community Empowerment Departments (CED). By attending the Consumer Advisory Committee, you will help to promote effective, efficient solutions that benefit a wide range of GSIL consumers.

Join us in promoting effective, efficient solutions that benefit a wide range of consumers.

**Meetings are held virtually via Microsoft Teams. The CAC meets quarterly (January, April, July, October) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month (\*) from 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

***(\*) Dates are subject to change***

Do you want to learn more, or have an idea or suggestion on how we can improve our services to better serve the needs of consumers please send an email to [CAC@gsil.org](mailto:CAC@gsil.org) or reach out by phone to GSIL Consumer and Committee Chair, Kevin Ennis, GSIL Staff Representative and Co-Chair, Kristy Sias, or GSIL Staff Representative Tiffany Gladu at **603.228.9680**.

### **Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC): Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: What is the CAC?** *A: The CAC is a GSIL sponsored committee that serves to make recommendations and/or provide key information to GSIL to improve consumer directed services and consumer benefits. These recommendations will be provided to GSIL leadership and GSIL Board of Directors for consideration.*

**Q: When and where does the CAC meet? How long is the meeting?** *A: Meetings shall be held quarterly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month from 1:30pm to 3:30pm, with minutes taken as a standing record of the discussion. The meetings are held virtually via Microsoft Teams. Special meetings of the CAC may be held at the discretion of the Co-Chairs on an "as needed" basis.*

**Q: Do I need to commit to attending every meeting?** *A: While consumers are encouraged to attend all meetings, it is not mandatory.*

**Q: What topics might be discussed at the CAC?** *A: Educating members about consumer direction; collaborating on improvements to GSIL services and providing consultation and support to GSIL regarding related legislative and advocacy issues at the State and Federal levels.*

**Still have questions? Please reach out to Kevin, Kristy and Tiffany!**

## What is Consumer Direction?

### **NOTHING ABOUT ME WITHOUT ME!**

“Consumer Direction” describes a program that offers maximum choice, individual empowerment, independence, and control. It allows you to live life on your terms. Consumer Direction is sometimes referred to as “Self Determination” or “Independent Living”.

Under a consumer directed model, the person with the disability is the “driver” of their services, making all decisions that affect their care in accordance with GSIL requirements.

At GSIL, you are in control of “The 4 W’s”:

Who: You choose who comes into your home and provides your services.

When: You choose what day and time your ACE will provide you with the services you need.

What: You choose what tasks will be completed.

Where: You choose where services will be provided.

The choices and responsibilities that come with a consumer directed program allow you autonomy and control over your life.

Some of your responsibilities as a GSIL consumer include:

- Interviewing, hiring, training, managing, supervising, and dismissing you ACE
- Allowing your ACE to use your phone to clock in and out
- Reaching out to your LTSC with any EVV issues, errors or MFP's
- Participating in the development of your care plan and backup plan (\*)
- Following GSIL’s policies and procedures in addition to Medicaid regulations
- Reviewing your Time Sheet Approval Form bi-weekly and notify GSIL if there is an error
- Participating in the required contact with your Long-Term Support Coordinator
- Making sure your Medicaid remains open

(\*) in compliance with Medicaid regulations

## Personal Care Services

GSIL offers two consumer directed programs which provide hands on assistance for our consumers to remain independent in the community.

## PCA (Personal Care Attendant) Services

PCA services focus on a preventative wellness model with RN oversight that concentrates on a consumer directed-person centered approach with ongoing skills training for individuals who use a wheelchair for mobility.

## **Consumer Eligibility for PCA Services**

The Long-Term Support (LTS) RN will meet with you (consumer) and determine your eligibility and continual eligibility based on He-W 552.03. A consumer will be determined eligible if they meet the following criteria, which is a must for PCA Services eligibility:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Be his/her own legal guardian
- Is chronically wheelchair-mobile
- Can participate in activities of daily living
- Can self-direct: I.E. makes informed choices about PCA services and have the willingness to select, direct, supervise and manage the personal care attendant in the implementation of a plan of care or you may choose to use an Authorized Representative to assist as identified.
- Lives in a non-institutional setting
- Requires at least 2 hours per day of medically necessary PCA services.
- Has a demonstrated need for PCA services, including at least 2 of the 7 following activities of daily living (ADL's): bathing/grooming; dressing /undressing; eating; mobility; passive range of motion exercise; taking medication; and toileting.

This medically oriented service could include assistance with bathing, dressing, toileting, personal hygiene, transfers, meal prep, light housekeeping, laundry, grocery shopping, range of motion (ROM) exercises, assistance with medications, bowel and bladder programs and other tasks outlined by NH Medicaid.

Some tasks your Attendant Care Employee (ACE) **cannot** perform for you are companionship, playing games, yard work, washing windows, pet care (unless the animal is a service animal and the task is on the Care plan), babysitting, doing household tasks for other family members in the home (remember the ACE is there for you), community access, or errands (other than a ACE can go grocery shopping).

## **PCSP (Personal Care Service Provider)**

PCSP services follow a consumer directed, person centered approach with ongoing skills training for individuals who have a significant disability and require assistance with their Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) to remain in the community.

## **Consumer Eligibility for PCSP Services**

To be eligible for GSIL's PCSP program you need to be at least 18 years of age and eligible for CFI (Choices for Independence) services. Once you have been approved for CFI services you will be assigned a case manager from a case management agency that is separate from GSIL. Your case manager will provide you with the options available to you. One of those options is GSIL's PCSP program.

To utilize GSIL's PCSP program you must be able to direct your own PCSP services. If you are unable or need assistance to direct your care, you may choose to have a Personal Care Representative (PCR) assist you with managing your PCSP services.

PCSP services could include assistance with bathing, dressing, toileting, personal hygiene, transfers, meal prep, light housekeeping, laundry, grocery shopping, errands, Range of Motion (ROM) exercises, assistance with medication access, medication reminders, and other tasks outlined by NH Medicaid.

Some tasks your ACE cannot perform for you are companionship, playing games, yard work, washing windows, pet care (unless the animal is a service animal and the care is on the Care plan), babysitting, doing household tasks for other family members in the home.

## **Responsibilities of GSIL under the PCA and PCSP Programs**

GSIL is a co-employer, which means we are responsible for:

- Ensuring payroll taxes, workers' compensation insurance, liability insurance and all other payroll functions are provided to your ACE.
- Ensuring compliance with all NH and federal labor laws.
- Processing all ACE new hire paperwork.
- Fostering a healthy and safe work environment.
- Maintaining a Registry of ACEs looking for additional hours.
- Providing Mandatory ACE Training within first 30 days of employment
- Providing online support through GSIL.org.

Providing consumers with an RN Coordinator to assist consumers in managing their PCA program or a Long-Term Support Coordinator (LTSC) to assist consumers in managing their PCSP program.



Each consumer will be assigned a coordinator to assist them with managing their PCA/PCSP services as much as needed. The coordinator is required to:

- Complete the necessary documentation for a consumer to be opened to services through GSIL.
- Assist the consumer in creating their care plan, which is a list of billable tasks an Attendant Care Employee (ACE) can provide.
- Meet Face to Face with each consumer in their home at least four (4) times a year.
- Have contact with your consumers at least every 60 days.
- Meet face to face with each consumer in their home to complete the required annual paperwork.
- Provide skills training to consumers on how to manage their PCA/PCSP services.

The PCSP care plan is created with the consumer in accordance with the parameters of CFI's allowable tasks. The PCA program utilizes a Self-Care and Functional Evaluation (SCFE) tool which is completed in conjunction with the consumer to address their personal care needs and determine the total number of hours needed. The SCFE is then sent to consumer's physician to sign off and a prior authorization is requested from the identified Manage Care Organization

### **Responsibilities of the GSIL Consumer under the PCA and PCSP Programs**

As a co-employer with GSIL, the consumer is responsible for the following:

- Assist with the creation of the care plan and/or Independent Living Plan.
- Screen, interview and hire your ACE with the assistance of your coordinator as needed.
- Support your ACE in completing and submitting the New Hire paperwork.
- Set the schedule for your ACE.
- Train and supervise your ACE.
- Provide gloves for your ACE (i.e. for personal care, housekeeping, meal prep)
- Review the care plan with your ACE.
- Ensure that tasks completed by your ACE are in accordance with the tasks defined on my care plan.
- Develop an emergency back-up plan as GSIL is not an emergency service and is not available 24/7.
- Evaluate your ACE's performance including terminating your ACE according to GSIL's policy and procedure.
- Notify GSIL's Human Resource Department or your LTS Coordinator immediately if termination of your ACE is necessary or when an ACE leaves your employment for any reason.
- Ensure a safe work environment for your ACE.
- Review the weekly Timesheet Approval Report verifying the hours worked by your ACE(s).
- Have Face to Face contact with your coordinator at least four times a year, 2 of these must be in person in the consumer's home. The other 2 may be virtual.
- Have contact with your coordinator at least every 60 days.
- Complete the annual Consumer Satisfaction Survey.

- Abide by GSIL's policies and procedures, including, but not limited to the ACE Timekeeping Policy.
- Adhere to all Department of Labor (DOL) rules and regulations.
- Abide by the DHHS rules that oversee consumer directed services.
- Make sure the consumer's Medicaid/CFI status is current and doesn't lapse. If Medicaid/CFI closed, the consumer will notify their GSIL coordinator.
- Stay within the authorized hours of service.
- For payment of any hours that go over the authorized hours or are not deemed a covered service by DHHS/MCO.
- Have a working phone for the ACE to clock in and out.
- If needed, choose an Authorized Representative (AR) or Personal Care Representative (PCR) to assist you in managing your services.
- If you choose to have an AR or PCR you are responsible to abide by the requirements listed on the AR /PCR forms.
- Participate in ongoing skills training.

### **Authorized Representative (AR)**

A person designated by the consumer who will assist the consumer with selecting, interviewing, scheduling, and directing the personal care attendants. This person cannot be an ACE employed by GSIL, nor can they have any financial relationship with another home health agency providing intermediary services or have any financial interest in GSIL.

All consumers under the PCA program can assign an AR to assist them with selection, directing, or scheduling their ACE. The appointment of an AR can be revoked at any time by either you or the AR. The RN Coordinator will ensure the contact information is updated at a minimum, on an annual basis at the time of the Care Plan renewal unless changes occur prior.

The responsibility of the AR is to assist with tasks identified by the consumer and does not give the AR authority to make decisions for consumer. Some tasks may include but limited to:

- Assist the consumer with selecting, directing, scheduling attendant care employees.
- Provide ongoing assistance as needed/requested by consumer that will assist consumer to gain greater control over his or her life.
- Assist consumer with the time sheet approval report.

If you would like to learn more, please contact your RN Coordinator to discuss.

## **Personal Care Representative (PCR)**

According to RSA 161-I, a PCR may be anyone acting on behalf of a consumer. This means you can select a family member, neighbor, friend, or other individual who is actively involved in your life and is willing to assist you with managing your PCSP program and your Attendant care Employee (ACE). However, the PCR may not be an ACE. The PCR is designated through a written document signed by the consumer or his/her legal guardian or by the person granted power of attorney.

When a PCR is selected, the consumer or his/her guardian or the person granted power of attorney must:

1. Notify GSIL in writing of the PCR's name and scope of authority by completing and submitting the Verification of Personal Care Representative Form; and
2. Notify GSIL in writing of any changes in representation by completing and sending in an amended Verification of Personal Care Representative Form to GSIL within 30 days of the date that the change occurs.

The following are the required tasks of a PCR:

1. The PCR will have weekly face-to-face contact with you and your attendant care employee (ACE).
2. The PCR will monitor and approve the Time Sheet Approval Forms.
3. The PCR will have contact with the GSIL Long Term Support Coordinator (LTSC) at least every 60 days.
4. The PCR will ensure the ACE takes the consumer's care preferences into consideration.
5. The PCR will communicate concerns or satisfaction to GSIL as needed.
6. The PCR will participate in training and evaluation of the ACE's performance, including termination of the ACE.

## **Backup Plan**

A back up plan describes how a consumer would have their needs met if their ACE were unable to provide the necessary services. A back up plan is required for PCA/PCSP consumers. Your coordinator will assist you in completing a current backup plan.

It is recommended to create your schedule in such a way that one ACE isn't performing all key tasks whereas your other ACEs may not be trained. We recommend cross training your ACEs and using more than one ACE, so you have a backup ACE.

Other options for back up plans would be family, friends or neighbors who could step in to perform critical services in the event your ACE is not available, i.e. they are sick, there is a bad storm, or they are on vacation. Depending on your critical services a "non-human" backup plan could also be in place, i.e. accessible phone, meals on wheels, laundry service.

Your back-up plan will be reviewed during your 60-day visits with your coordinator. However, if you have changes in between please contact your coordinator to update your back up plan.

## **NH 911 Cares**

Most people know that when you dial 9-1-1 from your home phone, the enhanced computer screen is filled in with the caller's name, address, and telephone number. Most people don't know, however, that your telephone number is technically known as ANI (Automatic Number Identification) and the location of the phone (aka your address) is known as ALI (Automatic Location Identification). ANI gives us ALI. New Hampshire 9-1-1 has the unique ability to add supplemental or additional information about permanent medical conditions or hazardous materials specific to YOUR location or address. The supplemental ALI database is reserved for permanent medical conditions and hazardous materials on site. It is driven by the person's phone number. If a person wanted to add information to the database, they would fill out the NH911 Cares form. The form asks for the person's name, address, telephone number and either the permanent medical condition (to be described in a few brief words) or the hazardous material information associated with the person's address. Once the form goes through the appropriate processing steps, the information is entered into the database. From that point forward, if a 9-1-1 call were to be placed from that person's telephone, this supplemental information will pop up on the 9-1-1 screen, and they would be able to pass this important information along to the local responders.

Granite State Independent Living (GSIL) provides this form at the time of intake and annually as needed. Filling this out could save a person's life. If you haven't already completed one and want to do so please talk to your LTS Coordinator.

## **Managing your ACE**

### **Recruiting, Interviewing and Hiring**

As the consumer of a consumer-directed program, you are responsible to recruit, interview and hire your Attendant Care Employee. It is okay if you have never hired or managed staff before, we are here to assist you!

### ***How do I find an ACE?***

- Consider hiring a family member. Restrictions may apply by program, talk with your Coordinator for more information.
- Consider your circle of friends, neighbors, and acquaintances, i.e. members of your book club or religious community.
- Open a recruitment request with GSIL's recruitment department. Our recruitment department can run ads on your behalf through GSIL's Applicant Tracking System.
- Utilize social media, including both personal and public community pages.
- Place fliers in the community on local job and community boards.
- Ask your friends and family to assist you with "word of mouth" recruitment.

Once I find an ACE, what is my next step?

- Your next step is to interview your candidate.
- The first interview can be over the phone to help you narrow the field of applicants. This is a good time to assess whether the applicant's availability and experience may be able to match your needs.
- Once you and the candidate determine that they have the availability and experience to meet your needs, your next step is to schedule an in-person interview.

Oh no, how do I interview someone?

- Even experts get nervous prior to an interview. Meeting someone for the first time and not knowing them or their background can be stressful. However, being prepared can reduce stress. A good tip is to write down your questions in advance. If you are interviewing more than one candidate, create one page for each candidate to include their name, contact information, availability, and experience, as well as their answers to your questions.
- Some questions that may be helpful:
  1. Do you have reliable transportation?
  2. Have you ever provided in-home care? What tasks did you perform?
  3. How long have you been doing this kind of work?
  4. What is your favorite part of providing home care?
- Be prepared to answer questions the applicant may have about rate of pay, employee benefits and specific tasks related to the position.
- There are questions that the Department of Labor prohibits. You must not ask your applicant any of the following questions:
  1. Questions about marital status, i.e. are you married?
  2. Questions about children, i.e. do you have any children?
  3. Questions about where they live, i.e. do you own your home or rent?
  4. Questions about criminal record, i.e. have you ever been in jail?
  5. Questions about military service, i.e. what type of discharge did you receive?
  6. Questions about national origin, i.e. of what country are you a citizen?
  7. Questions about age, i.e. how old are you?
  8. Questions about ethnic background, i.e. are you Spanish?
  9. Questions about religion, i.e. what is your religious affiliation?
  10. Questions relating to health, i.e. are you vaccinated against...?

What do I do when I have someone I would like to hire?

- Offer the position to your applicant and see if they accept.
- The next step is for your applicant to complete the Attendant Care Employee-Statewide Application (<https://gsil.isolvedhire.com/jobs/840935>). (If you require a complete paper packet, please reach out to your coordinator for assistance.)

- You can obtain this 3-minute application on the GSIL website's [Careers](https://gsil.isolvedhire.com/jobs/) Tab under "View Openings" (<https://gsil.isolvedhire.com/jobs/>).
- Onboarding will be initiated by GSILs HR department after the application is completed. Most of the forms required for onboarding will be completed by the applicant in the iSolve portal. The applicant will receive:
  1. An email from CGIPayroll@isolved.com with a link to the iSolve portal
  2. An email from HR with 2 forms: I9, State of NH Criminal Background Check – NOTE: The I9 must be completed with the consumer or coordinator
  3. An email from BEAS to complete their Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services screening
- Any ACE who is being hired under the PCSP program must also complete a 2-step TB test, at the expense of GSIL. \* ACE may be cleared to start working after the first negative TB test if all other necessary items have been received and an employee PIN is provided by GSIL's HR Department. Employees who fail to follow through on submitting results for a second TB test are subject to PIN deactivation.
- ACE cannot start working until GSIL's HR Department has confirmed all necessary documentation has been received and the applicant has been provided an employee PIN by HR. The employee PIN number can only be given to the applicant by HR and cannot be shared with anyone else, including consumers.

Please do not hesitate to contact your Coordinator for assistance with recruitment, interviewing or hiring. We are here to help!

### Scheduling your ACE

How do I create a schedule for my authorized hours? The best way to create your schedule is to consider:

1. How many hours you have been approved for?
2. Which days do you need assistance with care plan tasks?
3. What are the times of day you need assistance?
4. The availability of your ACE.

Remember: DHHS only pays for your ACE to complete billable tasks. Therefore, your ACE must be performing only the billable tasks listed on your care plan the duration of their shift.

ACE CANNOT work over your authorized hours, nor can they exceed 40 hours a week. If you feel you do not have the hours required to ensure your needs are wholly met, please reach out to your Coordinator to discuss which options may be available to you.

Here are some ideas to prevent "down time":

1. Consider "clustering care" by directing your ACE to assist with more tasks in a shorter period of time, as opposed to spreading your tasks throughout the day.
2. Break your hours into multiple shorter shifts throughout the day.
3. If you have laundry and housekeeping as tasks and your laundry is on site, you can have your ACE start the laundry then take care of housekeeping tasks while the clothes are being washed/dried. If

your laundry needs to be done off site, you can have your ACE take the laundry to the laundromat, start the wash and then go grocery shopping while waiting for the clothes to be washed/dried.

4. If housekeeping is one of your tasks, your ACE can clean out your refrigerator or clean up clutter.
5. Although this is a consumer directed program and your schedule should reflect your unique needs, being flexible with your ACE will help to retain good staff. For example, if you need assistance with bathing, housekeeping and errands, you should look at if you prefer to take a bath/shower in the morning or at night. If you prefer to bathe in the morning, then scheduling your ACE for the morning hours will allow them to assist you with bathing at your preferred time and then complete the housekeeping and errands.

PLEASE REMEMBER: ACEs are unable to assist with companionship, decorating, lawn mowing or snow removal, babysitting, deep or “spring” cleaning, or any other tasks not clearly listed on your care plan.

### Training My ACE

GSIL will provide you with an Employee Manual that includes the policies and procedures that you and your ACE are required to follow. Under consumer directed programs, we believe you are the best person to train your ACE on how you like your tasks completed. A copy of the care plan you created will be left in your home and is a valuable tool to train your ACE on the tasks they will be performing.

Also, the state licensing requirements for PCA/PCSP services require all new ACEs to attend a Mandatory ACE training within 30 days of their first day worked. This training is offered virtually at different times and in person to accommodate all ACEs. The ACE will be scheduled to attend this training when they are contacted by HR with their employee PIN number.

### How do I supervise my ACE?

It is important you treat your ACE with dignity and respect, as you would like them to treat you.

- If you have issues to discuss, it is best to set aside separate time and talk openly and honestly about your concern.
- You will document your conversation on an employee conversation form, or an Employee Warning form, depending on the severity of the issue and send the form to GSIL’s HR department. You can obtain these forms from your LTSC.
- You will receive an evaluation form for each ACE on the annual anniversary of their hire with GSIL. It is important you complete the form, review it with your ACE and return it to GSIL.
- If you have an ACE that has gone above and beyond, you can submit a recognition form (see your LTSC for the form) and your ACE will be entered into a monthly drawing for a gift. They will also be sent a certificate of recognition.

### How do I terminate my ACE?

If you are unable to resolve an issue with your ACE, you can reach out to your coordinator for support. If you still feel your ACE should be terminated, you must complete the following:

- Contact your ACE via phone or in person to let them know you want to terminate them.

- Complete the Change of Employment Status Form (you can obtain these forms from your coordinator or on the GSIL website) and submit it to GSIL's Human Resource Department as soon as possible.

## **Professional Boundaries**

Professional boundaries are important for any work environment, including for GSIL consumers and their ACE(s). Maintaining professional boundaries results in healthy relationships which is very important given the nature of the assistance provided as part of our caregiving programs. Once boundaries are crossed, it's very difficult to go back. Professional boundaries are defined as the limits to the relationship between someone in a professional role and the person in their care.

When you hire someone to assist you with your personal care needs, it can be a challenge to stick to professional boundaries. You have someone working in your home, your personal space, helping you with personal tasks. You may have hired someone you already know like a family member or friend, or you may hire someone you have never met before.

If you have hired a family member or a friend, you may find it challenging to treat them as employees. If you have hired someone you do not have a previous relationship with, you may find it easier to treat them as an employee, however, as you get to know them, you may start to think of them as friends as they are helping you with your personal tasks.

Why are professional boundaries important?

Boundaries are important to promote work-life balance for your employees and can prevent caregiver burnout. They also protect your own well-being.

As a consumer of a consumer-directed program, you are both the co-employer and supervisor of your ACE. Setting boundaries is one of your responsibilities and is also something that will help you find success living life on your own terms in the community.

We have some recommendations to get you started and are here to help in any way you need.

- Set and discuss boundaries at the beginning of the employer/employee relationship.
- Stick to your agreed upon schedule while remaining flexible if the occasional, reasonable accommodation is needed.
- Treat your ACE with dignity and respect.
- Only direct your ACE to assist you with tasks authorized on your care plan.
- Never exchange gifts or money with your ACE; GSIL does not permit ACEs to accept gifts or ask for money.
- Always follow GSIL policies and procedures.
- Communicate any concerns with your Coordinator.

Remember, both parties hold the right and responsibility of maintaining boundaries and respect goes both ways.

Make sure to keep your (and your ACE's) personal life personal - do not bring it into the workplace.



## **Termination of GSIL PCA/PCSP Services**

A consumer's PCA/PCSP services may be terminated for several reasons including, but not limited to the following:

1. The consumer chooses to terminate their services.
2. The consumer is no longer eligible for CFI services (PCSP only).
3. The consumer is not able to self-direct his or her ACE and does not have an AR or PCR.
4. The consumer and/or the AR/PCR is unable to manage the program.
5. The consumer does not abide by the roles and responsibilities as detailed in the Verification of Consumer's Roles and Responsibilities form; or
6. The consumer's care plan is found to be unsafe due to the level of services available to the consumer.

If the PCSP services are terminated by GSIL, a letter will be sent to the consumer and/or their PCR, DPOA or guardian informing them of the date on which services will be discontinued. The Human Resource Department at GSIL will also contact the ACE(s) to let them know the date on which they will be terminated as an employee for the consumer.

## **Who to Contact**

Granite State Independent Living has a large staff available to assist you when needed.

Your first contact should be your RN Coordinator or Long-Term Support Coordinator (LTSC), however, the following are also available depending on your need, by calling our main number, 603-228-9680:

1. Senior Director of Long Term Supports
2. Statewide PCSP Director
3. Human Resources
4. Payroll Department

## Compliance

### Fraud, Waste and Abuse

GSIL has adopted policies and procedures to prevent, detect, deter, and correct fraud, waste, and abuse in accordance with federal and state laws, such as the Federal False Claims Act and the NH False Claims Act, which prohibit false claims and other fraudulent activity. Violations of these laws can result in civil actions and penalties. Other laws and regulations governing the integrity of the Medicaid/Medicare Programs are in place to reduce fraud, waste, and abuse. **Civil actions and penalties can be brought against the individual committing the crime and the organization.** Actions may include loss of all federal/state assistance to the individual committing the crime or allowing the crime to take place. ***If you know or suspect activity of this nature, it must be reported immediately to Compliance or the hotline. If you are uncertain whether an activity is fraudulent, reach out to Compliance or the hotline.*** We do not discriminate or retaliate against any whistleblower who files in good faith, a report for false claims or participates in a GSIL investigation. GSIL takes all reports of fraud seriously, completes an internal investigation and cooperates with the office of the New Hampshire Attorney General. *Examples of false claims include:*

- Billing of items or services that were never rendered.
- Billing for hours that are not authorized.
- Billing for tasks that are not authorized in the care plan.
- Billing for hours while consumer is in the hospital or rehab.

### Reporting Compliance Concerns

Granite State Independent Living's Compliance and Ethics Hotline is a simple, confidential, risk-free method for us to report compliance concerns. Your concerns can be reported by calling (603) 410-6577, emailing [compliance@gsil.org](mailto:compliance@gsil.org), or visiting the Compliance page on the GSIL website at: [https://gsil.org/consumer\\_resources/compliance/](https://gsil.org/consumer_resources/compliance/) Filling out the form online allows you to remain anonymous if you wish.

You can also scan the QR code listed below:



The Federal False Claims Act makes it a crime for any person or organization to knowingly make or file a false claim for payment from the federal government.

The Compliance and Ethics Hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Calls are not recorded, and confidentiality is protected up to the limits of the law and to the greatest extent possible. You are encouraged to submit reports relating to violation, misconduct, or areas of concern, as well as asking for guidance related to policies and procedures. Maintaining the high ethical standards of GSIL is everyone's responsibility. If we become aware of or suspect a situation that might jeopardize the ethical integrity of our organization, it is our obligation to report the circumstances. This means we:

- Report any suspicious activity in good faith.
- Provide true and complete information.
- Keep matters under investigation confidential, unless otherwise required or permitted by law.

These duties apply to all of us, including employees, board members, consumers, providers, students, vendor representatives, and independent contractors while carrying out their duties at or on behalf of GSIL.

### **Ensuring Compliance**

**Granite State Independent Living** (GSIL) provides services that are funded by New Hampshire Medicaid (MCD) and is overseen by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) as well as the New Hampshire Department of Labor (DOL).

***All GSIL employees and consumers must be in compliance with the regulations required by NH MCD, DHHS and DOL.***

While our Long-Term Care Coordinators are critical in making sure our consumers and ACEs are in compliance with these regulations, GSIL also has Compliance, Human Resources and Payroll departments. At GSIL, we routinely review and audit our consumer and ACE records to ensure we remain in compliance with our governing entities.

#### **To be compliant, the following must be followed:**

- Consumers must be eligible for NH MCD and the MCD must be current.
- Consumers must have authorizations for the services they receive. NH MCD/DHHS will only authorize payment based on the number of authorized hours a consumer has been approved for. If a consumer exceeds their authorized hours, the State of NH DOL requires them to be paid, however GSIL cannot bill MCD for the services provided over the authorized hours. *It is the consumer's responsibility to ensure authorized hours are not exceeded.*
- DHHS and MCD will only reimburse for tasks listed on consumer's care plan.
- ACE are required by the DOL to take an unpaid break of at least 30 minutes during an uninterrupted period of 5 or more hours.
- ACE must complete billable tasks listed on a consumer's care plan the entire duration of their shift.

***Compliance is everyone's responsibility. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your Coordinator for assistance.***

## Payroll

GSIL is a biweekly employer. Timekeeping is through the Ankota app and payroll is processed in iSolve. ACEs should be sure they maintain their access to both apps. GSIL strongly encourages all employees to enroll in direct deposit to ensure timely receipt of wages. Employees can set up direct deposit in iSolve or by requesting a direct deposit form from [HR](#) or [Payroll](#), or calling the main office at (603) 228-9680.

### Ankota is GSIL's Time & Attendance Program

GSIL has implemented an Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) system, Ankota, in compliance with rules set forth by The Center for Medicare and Medicaid for all Medicaid providers. This system electronically records the type of service performed, the individual receiving the service, the date of the service, the location of service delivery, the individual providing the service, and the time the service begins and ends.

To ensure compliance, GSIL has created an Ankota guide to provide you with an overview of Ankota and assist you in managing your services & your Attendant Care Employees (ACE). In addition, please reference the Attendant Care Employee Handbook, which also outlines Ankota.

### Consumer Payroll Summary Report

A summary report of hours worked by employee, per consumer, is generated from the payroll management system on a biweekly basis. A copy of this report is then mailed or emailed to you. As the consumer, it is your responsibility to review the report to ensure accuracy of hours worked per week by your ACE(s) and that the hours or services provided are consistent with your approved hours of services in your care plan. If you find any discrepancies, please notify the [Payroll](#) department before 3pm on the Monday of the pay week. This will help ensure the ACE is not erroneously overpaid.

The following is a sample Time Sheet Approval Report:

Granite State Independent Living 21 Chenell Dr Concord, NH 033018359									
GSIL TIMESHEET APPROVAL REPORT Printed 10/25/2024									
<b>Consumer:</b>		<b>GSIL Coordinator:</b>			<b>NH Case Manage</b>				
<b>Medicaid:</b>		<b>Phone:</b>			<b>Phone:</b>				
<b>Phone:</b>									
Here is your weekly timesheet for review. If any worked shifts are missing or incomplete, please contact your coordinator to complete a Missed Punch Form (MPF). Shifts cannot be corrected without a MPF entered by your coordinator and approved by you and your ACE. If you believe there are shifts listed that were not worked by your ACE, please contact Payroll immediately at 603-717-0893 or by replying to this email.									
If all worked hours are approved, no further action is required on your part. By <b>NOT</b> contacting GSIL's Payroll Department, you have approved your employee's hours.									
An asterisk (*) next to a time indicates an overnight shift Double asterisk (**) next to a time indicates visit is not approved yet									
Period of: 10/5/2024 to 10/11/2024									
Authorized Hrs per week: 35		Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Worked
Program	Employee	10/05/24	10/06/24	10/07/24	10/08/24	10/09/24	10/10/24	10/11/24	Hours
PCSP		5:53AM to 8:52AM, 4:42PM to 6:30PM	6:07AM to 11:06AM	6:32AM to 11:38AM	6:00AM to 11:01AM	6:00AM to 9:01AM, 4:58PM to 6:55PM	6:24AM to 8:56AM, 4:57PM to 8:15PM	5:55AM to 8:40AM, 5:38PM to 6:48PM	34.60
<b>Total Hours Worked</b>		<b>4.78</b>	<b>4.98</b>	<b>5.10</b>	<b>5.02</b>	<b>4.97</b>	<b>5.83</b>	<b>3.92</b>	<b>34.60</b>
<b>Total Billable Units = 138</b>									

- If you find an error on the timesheet, please report it to your coordinator immediately. ACEs are also required to report any errors to you or your AR/PCR as soon as they're aware of the error.

### **What happens if my ACE misses a punch?**

As the consumer, you or your AR/PCR must reach out to your LTSC by telephone within 2 business days to report the missed punch.

1. Your LTSC will confirm the hours worked and the reason for the missed punch with you.
2. The LTSC will create the Missed Punch Form (MPF) electronically and notify you when the MPF is available to be completed in the Ankota APP.
3. The MPF must be completed by your ACE and signed by both you and the ACE.
4. ACEs should complete the MPF during their next shift to ensure timely payment of wages.

### **MPF FAQs**

1. Coordinators can't create a missed punch form based on a request from your ACE.
2. Payroll can't create an MPF to correct a shift.
3. Shifts cannot be corrected with completing an MPF.
4. Your service coordinator is responsible for validating your identity during the telephone call.
5. MPFs are only available for 30 days after the date of the shift. You would then need to report the error again to your coordinator for your ACE to be paid for the shift.
6. ACEs are not permitted to fill out and submit MPFs.
7. If the ACE forgets to clock out, they should not clock out when they remember later. Clocking out later could result in ACEs being overpaid and you going over your authorized hours. You should report the error to your coordinator, who will then create a MPF.
8. Payroll will send an email for most errors as a courtesy to your ACE and cc you and your coordinator if we have your email addresses in Ankota. However, accurate timekeeping and the reporting of errors is the responsibility of the ACE and consumer whether an email is sent or not.

### **Why does my ACE sometimes go over their hours?**

1. Your ACE may not have added up their hours correctly – they should check their weekly hours on the Ankota APP to best keep track of their weekly hours worked.
2. To make sure your ACE is clocking in and out accurately, we recommend ACE clock in and out on the hour, quarter hour or half hour for easier tracking.
3. You or your ACE can write on a calendar in your home each time they clock in/out so you can also keep track of their hours worked.

### **Some suggestions to make sure your ACE clocks in and out on time:**

1. You or the ACE can set an alarm on your phone, Alexa, or other electronic device.
2. Use a bright colored note or paper on our door to remind the ACE to clock in/out.
3. As the consumer, you should make sure your ACE has clocked in before they start performing tasks on your care plan and make sure they clock out before they leave.

***Ensuring EVV compliance is one of your most important jobs as the supervisor of your program. Missed punches and corrections should occur very infrequently and will be monitored and tracked.***

The following is the link to the ACE Timekeeping Policy for your convenience.

This PDF document can be found on the GSIL Website's ACE & Consumer Portal page, in the HR folder.

<https://gsil.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/12-31-24-LTS-5.01-ACE-Timekeeping-Policy-9.6.24.pdf>

### Billing Consumers for Hours Policy

GSIL's consumer directed programs are based on the understanding that the consumer and/or their authorized representative (PCA program) or personal care representatives (PCSP program) direct and manage their personal care program(s) and by extension will abide by GSIL's Policies and Procedures. These policies include the agreement that:

- ACEs may not work more than 40 hours per week, including travel time, even if they work for more than one consumer unless approved by GSIL.
- Consumers and/or their PCR/AR will assure their employees do not exceed the number of hours for which the consumer is authorized.
- Consumer and/or their PCR/AR will assure ACEs only perform tasks listed on the consumer's PCA or PCSP plan of care.
- Consumers and/or their PCR/AR will not schedule ACEs to work when services have not been authorized, for example, when the consumer is in the hospital or rehabilitation facility.
- Consumers and/or their personal care representatives cannot allow 2 ACE to clock in at the same time. Exceptions may be granted by the LTS coordinator for training of new ACEs.
- Consumers and/or their personal care representatives may not allow ACE to provide services if the consumer is no longer eligible for Medicaid.
- ACEs may not provide services prior to the new hire process being completed, and receiving "ok" from HR.

### Consumer Instructions for Travel

All ACEs that travel from one consumer's home directly to another consumer's will be paid for their travel time. Acceptable modes of travel can be a car, public transportation, or walking.

If your ACE leaves your home to go directly to another consumer's home, generally taking less than 1 hour, the ACE is paid to travel to the next consumer. This is automatically calculated via Ankota and there is nothing you need to do.

- Travel time is not considered part of your weekly allotted authorized hours.
- The policy on overtime still stands; therefore, ACEs are not allowed to go over 40 hours in one week (including their travel time).
- Any further questions can be addressed to your LTS Coordinator or payroll department at GSIL.

**Please Remember: We are here to help you! If you are struggling with the EVV process or having difficulty managing your hours, please reach out to your Coordinator for support and assistance.**

## **Human Resources**

In simplest terms, the Human Resources department is the department responsible for managing the employee life cycle (i.e., recruiting, hiring, onboarding, training, and terminating employees), administering employee benefits and keeping up to date with any laws that may affect Granite State Independent Living and its employees.

The HR department is tasked with maximizing employee productivity and protecting the company from any issues that may arise within the workforce. If you need any assistance or if you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the HR department at 603-228-9680 or via email at [HR@GSIL.org](mailto:HR@GSIL.org) and we will work with you to resolve your concerns.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Any type of sexual harassment is against company policy and is unlawful.

We firmly prohibit sexual harassment of any employee by another employee, supervisor, or third party, including vendors. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate the morality of employees, it is to ensure that in the workplace, no employee is subject to sexual harassment. While it is not easy to define precisely what sexual harassment is, it may include: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including, but not limited to, sexually related drawings, pictures, jokes, teasing, e-mails, text messages, uninvited touching, or other sexually related comments. The conduct prohibited by this policy includes conduct in any form including but not limited to e-mail, voice mail, chat rooms, Internet use or history, text messages, pictures, images, writings, words, or gestures.

Sexual harassment of an employee will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. There will be no adverse action taken against employees who report violations of this policy in good faith or participate in the investigation of such violations.

Any employee who believes that (s)he is a victim of sexual harassment should immediately report such actions in accordance with the following procedure. All complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated as confidentially as possible.

Any employee who believes that (s)he has been harassed or has been retaliated against for complaining of sexual harassment should report the situation immediately to: Manager of Human Resources at (603) 717-0814 and located at 21 Chenell Drive, Concord, NH 03301, or you may report it to any member of management. If an employee makes a report and no one responds or does not respond in a manner the employee deems satisfactory or consistent with this policy, the employee should report the situation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) also located at the above office in Concord.

1. GSIL will investigate every reported incident immediately. Any employee, supervisor, or agent of GSIL who has been found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. GSIL will conduct all investigations in a discreet manner.
2. GSIL recognizes that every investigation requires a determination based on all the facts in the matter. We also recognize the serious impact a false accusation can have. We trust that all employees will continue to act responsibly.
3. The reporting employee and any employee participating in any investigation under this policy have

GSIL's assurance that no reprisals will be taken as a result of a sexual harassment complaint. It is our policy to encourage discussion of the matter, to help protect others from being subjected to similar inappropriate behavior.

GSIL will investigate all such reports as confidentially as possible. Adverse action will not be taken against an employee because he or she, in good faith, reports or participates in the investigation of a violation of this policy. Violations of this policy are not permitted and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **Workplace Harassment**

A hostile work environment is a workplace where an employee feels uncomfortable, intimidated, or harassed due to their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, or any other protected characteristic. This can include verbal or physical harassment, such as offensive jokes, slurs, or physical touching.

We prohibit harassment of one employee by another employee, supervisor or third party for any reason based on a "protected class" including but not limited to: race, color, religion, sex including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, veteran status, genetic information, or any other protected class under federal, state, or local law.

In addition to the federal classes listed above, the following are also protected classes in the state of New Hampshire: marital status (including civil union status) and sexual orientation.

The purpose of this policy is not to regulate the personal morality of employees. It is to ensure that in the workplace, no employee harasses another for any reason or in any manner. The conduct prohibited by this policy includes conduct in any form including but not limited to e-mail, voice mail, chat rooms, internet use or history, text messages, pictures, images, writings, words, or gestures.

While it is not easy to define precisely what harassment is, it includes: slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments or visual depictions, unwelcome jokes and teasing.

Any employee who believes that (s)he has been harassed or has been retaliated against for complaining of sexual harassment should report the situation immediately to: Manager of Human Resources at (603) 717-0814 and located at 21 Chenell Drive, Concord, NH 03301, or you may report it to any member of management. If an employee makes a report to any of these contacts and they do not respond or does not respond in a manner the employee deems satisfactory or consistent with this policy, the employee should report the situation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) also located at the above office in Concord.

GSIL will investigate all such reports as confidentially as possible. Adverse action will not be taken against an employee because he or she, in good faith, reports or participates in the investigation of a violation of this policy. Violations of this policy are not permitted and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The following are links for the [GSIL Employee Handbook](#) and the [Code of Conduct Handbook](#) that your ACE receives. These PDF documents can be found on the GSIL Website's ACE & Consumer Portal page, in the HR folder. [https://gsil.org/consumer\\_resources/human-resources/](https://gsil.org/consumer_resources/human-resources/)



## **Other Programs Available at Granite State Independent Living (GSIL)**

As mentioned in the description of an IL Center and our Philosophy, GSIL has many programs to assist our consumers with remaining independent. Below represents additional GSIL programs available to you and who to contact if you want more information.

### **Educational Opportunities**

#### **Earn & Learn**

Earn and Learn is a partnership of Vocational Rehabilitation New Hampshire (VRNH), Granite State Independent Living (GSIL), and the Manchester School District. The program guides at risk high school students with disabilities to become more engaged in their education and assists students in finding the relevance of their education to their career goals and life after high school. The program is funded by the Manchester School District and VR New Hampshire.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Students who are enrolled in the Manchester School District who have an IEP or 504 plan.
- Meets the age requirements (16-22).

Located at: Granite State Independent Living Office, Manchester

#### **IMPACCT Academy**

IMPACCT is a partnership of Vocational Rehabilitation New Hampshire (VRNH), Granite State Independent Living (GSIL), and high schools throughout the state. The program is dedicated to helping students with disabilities become part of the local workforce as they navigate from high school to employment, post-secondary education, or training that leads to a career. The IMPACCT program is funded by VR New Hampshire.

Eligibility Requirements:

- A student is eligible to participate if a current Pre-ETS VR customer, or
- Enrolled in an educational program; and
- Meets the age requirements (16-22); and
- Has a current IEP, 504, or documented disability.

Locations:

- Manchester Region- Manchester Community College
- Concord Region- NHTI and Lakes Region Community College
- Berlin Region- White Mountain Community College, Berlin, and Littleton
- Seacoast Region-McConnell Center, Dover
- Nashua Region- GSIL office, Nashua

## Program Description:

Comprehensive instruction focuses on the 5 Pre-Employment Transition Services:

- Job Exploration & Counseling
- Work-Based Learning Experiences
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational program
- Workplace Readiness Training
- Instruction in Self-Advocacy

In small groups (16 students max) students work through an academic curriculum presented as a simulated work environment with soft skills braided throughout. Students will have the opportunity to earn academic credit through Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs), become more aware of career options, have work-based learning experiences out in the community, personal finance, budgeting, health, and life skills activities to obtain a fuller understanding of the world of work and life after high school. The competency-based curriculum aligns with DOE College Career Readiness Standards and provides blended learning with differentiated instruction.

## Program Schedule

There are 3 cohorts offered each year:

- (2) 14-week sessions (*Fall & Spring*)
- (1) 5-week session (*Summer*)

Scheduling for each session is as follows:

- 4 days a week of academic instruction
- 1 day a week of a work experience
- Program is 15 hours a week in fall and spring and 20 hours in summer
- Typical hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00-12:00

“Work experiences are the number one indicator of post-secondary success”

For further information, contact GSIL at 603.228.9680 or [info@gsil.org](mailto:info@gsil.org)

## **Independent Living (IL) Services**

### **Independent Living Plans**

**GSIL is more than a service provider, we are a Center for Independent Living or CIL.**

The purpose of CILs is to “promote a philosophy of independent living including a philosophy of consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, and individual and system advocacy, in order to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities, and the integration and full inclusion of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of American society.”

**Independent Living Plans** are a tool CILs like GSIL use to help you reach your goals so you can have your needs met and thrive in the community, living life on your terms. Your Coordinator is here to work with you and assist you in meeting your goals.

**What matters most to you?**

**What is something you would love to make part of your life?**

**What do you need that you don't have?**

**When you think about your life, do you feel like there is anything missing?**

These are some great questions to get you thinking about your goals and your needs.

Once you define your goals and create your Independent Living Plan, you will work with your Coordinator step-by-step. First, we will help you define your goals and build your Independent Living Plan. Next, we will brainstorm and collaborate with you to find a path towards your goals, providing information, support and encouragement along the way.

Your goals will be reviewed at every visit with your Coordinator, and we are here to work with you in between visits to help ensure your success. Your Independent Living Plan is yours; you can add to it or remove from it at any time as your goals or needs change.

Your Coordinator is here to support and guide you along the way- from defining your goals and creating an Independent Living Plan, to brainstorming and collaborating on building a path to meeting your goals, to help you with your outcome scores.

### **Access Modification Program (AMP)**

GSIL consults with individuals around their accessibility needs and provides referrals to licensed, vetted, vendors throughout New Hampshire. In many cases, GSIL can assist in establishing a plan and identifying funding sources for the accessibility project.

GSIL is the funder of last resort, and any other available funding resource must be exhausted before GSIL can support funding.

GSIL funding for AMP projects is based on financial eligibility. Please note, we cannot provide reimbursement for any equipment or modifications that you have personally paid for.

We can assist with home accessibility evaluations and solutions including, but not limited to:

- Wheelchair Ramps o Vehicle Modifications o Grab Bars o Bathroom Modifications

- Stair Lifts
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Adaptive Equipment for hearing or visual impairments

### **Information and Referral**

Information and Referral (I&R) is the art, science, and practice of bringing people and services together by providing unbiased information about available community-wide resources and services.

The Information and Referral Specialist assesses your needs, evaluates appropriate resources, identifies organizations capable of meeting those needs, providing enough information about each organization to help you make an informed choice.

The issues, questions and solutions are as diverse as those seeking assistance. This may include personal/home care services, education, benefits counseling, housing, transportation, employment, emergency shelters, mental health assistance, new community orientation and much, much more.

Those needing help often do not know where to begin, so they may not get the assistance they require, or they may waste a lot of time searching through various websites or calling multiple places with mixed results. With I&R they receive the information they need in one simple step. Our Information and Referral Specialists follow a process that includes:

- Establishing rapport
- Gathering information through active listening
- Determining the caller's previous efforts
- Problem solving in partnership with the caller
- Matching resources with needs
- Identifying potential barriers
- Making appropriate referrals to service

**For more information, please contact [info@gsil.org](mailto:info@gsil.org).**

### **Nursing Facility Transitional Services (NFT)**

GSIL believes individuals should have the right to live in the least restrictive environment. If the individual fails it is okay because at least they tried, and it is our job to help them succeed. The Supreme Court decision known as *Olmstead vs. L.C.*, has changed the landscape for disability advocates. It provides the framework for advocacy to support persons with disabilities to transition out of nursing homes and other institutions into the community. Olmstead also supports persons with disabilities to remain in the community and not be placed in institutions.

What makes us special is:

- Our IL Philosophy
- Years of experience working in the community

- Everyone has an Independent Living Plan (wrap around services)
- Care Planning/service coordination/life skills training
- Collaboration/good communication/Person Centered approach between Nursing Home/DHHS/and local Service Link (Bringing all the parties to the table including consumer)
- Nothing about me without me!

Our coordinators are instrumental in assisting individuals seeking transition from institutional care back to community setting despite the lack of accessible housing and resources for individuals in New Hampshire.

If you or anyone you know is interested in more information about NFT please call 603-228-9680 and ask for information and referral.

### **Peer Support Program**

This program is offered to GSIL consumers who participate in any of our consumer-directed programs. It is designed and offered to assist individuals with a disability to network and interact. The Peer Support Program offers:

- 1-1 conversation with someone who has personal knowledge.
- Aid with managing services like the PCA/PSCP program.
- Links to resources and information.
- Assistance with navigating a system that is not always accessible to first-time users.
- When additional help is needed, hands on guidance for supporting Peers.
- In person events.

### **Peer Mentoring**

Peer mentoring is a relationship between an individual with a similar disability who has lived successfully through specific life experiences (peer mentor) and now wants to aid another individual with a disability who wants to make their own successful adjustment and transition back into the mainstream community, at whatever level that might be for them.

Mentoring evolved with the belief that persons with disabilities who are living independently can be successful with reaching their own personal goals and dreams and be actively involved in their community. They can act as wonderful role models for a peer, newly injured, newly diagnosed or someone who may be aging with a disability and needs support with practical advice for doing Activities of Daily Living. If a Mentor doesn't have an answer for a peer, they will connect the peer with GSIL for additional assistance.

### **Peer Support Group**

Peer Support is a system of giving and receiving support, information and guidance founded on the key principles of respect, shared responsibility, and mutual agreement, when people use their own experiences to help each other.

The Peer Support Group at GSIL is where colleagues, consumers and others meet, (it's cross disability for consumers and peers of GSIL/United Spinal Association) in person or online, as equals to give each other connection and support on a reciprocal basis.

For more information, please contact [peersupport@gsil.org](mailto:peersupport@gsil.org).

### **Ticket to Work Program (TTW)**

The Ticket to Work Program was established over 20 years ago by Social Security to assist those receiving disability benefits to return to work. Those receiving benefits are automatically eligible for this voluntary program. Social Security does expect those who enter the program to have a goal of "self-sufficiency". This means that the consumer will eventually get to the point where their disability benefits do stop permanently. There is no penalty for those who try but do not reach this goal. Ticket to Work connects you with free employment services to help you decide if working is right for you, prepare for work, find a job, or maintain success while you are working. If you choose to participate, you will receive services such as career counseling, job development, assistance with resume development and interview skills and on-going assistance in managing your benefits while in the program.

#### **Who Qualifies?**



Everyone age 18 through 64 who receives Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits is eligible to participate in the TTW Program. Participation in the TTW Program is free and voluntary. Granite State Independent Living has been approved by Social Security to provide the TTW program since 2008.

Participants who are interested can contact the TTW hotline at 1-866-968-7842 or they can get a direct referral by contacting the I&R department at GSIL.



### **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)/Employment**

The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation assists eligible New Hampshire citizens with disabilities to secure suitable competitive integrated employment and financial and personal independence by providing rehabilitation services. They have programs to work with transition aged youth, blind and visually impaired, Deaf, and Hard of Hearing and more.

Granite State Independent Living has been an approved vendor for Vocational Rehabilitation for many years. We can provide job development services for VR through their Community Rehabilitation Program.

Any individual with a disability can apply to VR for services. To be found eligible they must have a disability that interferes with their ability to obtain and maintain employment. Once found eligible they are connected with a VR Counselor. The individual and Counselor work together to develop a plan to achieve the desired employment goal. The plan often includes referring the individual to a vendor to assist with job development activities.

This is where GSIL can come in. The Counselor can make a formal referral to us, schedule a referral meeting, and identify what services are authorized for GSIL to provide. The GSIL Employment Coordinator then starts meeting with the individual and providing the identified services. The Employment Coordinator also provides the VR Counselor with regular reports on activities and progress.

Once the individual obtains employment then the VR Counselor can authorize on-going support from the Employment Coordinator. This typically will go on for up to three months and sometimes longer. Once the VR Counselor considers that the individual is stable in their employment they will close the case out. If any issues occur after that point the case can be re-opened for postemployment support.

Link to Bureau of Vocational Services web site: <https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/deputy><https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/deputy-commissioner/bureau-of-vocational-rehabilitation>

### **Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA)**

Granite State Independent Living (GSIL) provides services for beneficiaries receiving Social Security Disability (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits through our Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Program.

WIPA is a program designed to enable beneficiaries with disabilities to receive accurate information regarding their benefits and work incentives so they can make appropriate decisions when returning to work. This will hopefully result in a successful return to work for beneficiaries.

There are several ways a beneficiary can become involved with the WIPA program. They can receive assistance by calling the Ticket-To-Work Helpline, calling this number will generate a referral that will go directly to the Community Work Incentive Coordinator (CWIC). Once a referral has been initiated, the beneficiary will be contacted by CWIC within 3-5 days of receiving the referral.

A beneficiary can receive services through WIPA if they are enrolled with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). GSIL has been an approved vendor for VR for many years. VR counselors can refer their clients to a CWIC for either a Benefits Summary and Analysis (BS&A) or for basic Benefits Counseling.

A beneficiary can also call GSIL directly and request WIPA services through our L&R team, even if they are denied a referral through the Ticket to Work Helpline for not meeting the current eligibility standards.

No matter how a beneficiary comes to the WIPA program they will be provided with in-depth counseling about benefits and the effects of working on those benefits. They can also receive continued support throughout their employment regarding their SSA and other federal benefits.

For more information, please call 603-228-9680 7028 or email [benefits@gsil.org](mailto:benefits@gsil.org)

## **Transportation**

### Transportation Reimbursement Program (TRP)

Program qualified\* consumers find and pay upfront their own rides either via bus, taxi, Uber, or private car and may be reimbursed up to \$100 per month.

### Van Transportation

Program qualified\* consumers using GSIL vehicles and drivers can attend social outings such as shopping, movies, visiting friends or family going to the beach, mountains, out to dinner or any other place you want to go within New Hampshire.

Both services are funded through grants and available based on resources, these are not guaranteed services.

### \*Qualifications for TRP and Van Transportation Programs

- Financial eligibility
- No accessible vehicle in the household
- Physician's verification of disability documentation
- Has no driver's license (ID Purposes only as a possible exception)
- For van services, unable to transfer into a standard passenger vehicle

### Fee for Service

Consumer pays out of pocket for van services. These rides are not restricted to NH only.

### Medicaid

Rides are set up using the appropriate Medicaid Broker.

- Well Sense - CTS (844)909-7433
- Healthy Families MTM (888)597-1192
- AmeriHealth - CTS (833)492-9923
- NH DHHS CTS (844)259-4780

**For more information on transportation options through GSIL please contact**

**[GSILTransportation@gsil.org](mailto:GSILTransportation@gsil.org)**