



Local Health Department and Centers for Independent Living Meeting Facilitation Guide

Purpose of the Guide

This facilitation guide is designed to assist local health department (LHD) staff in planning and facilitating meetings with representatives of Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and to think through the goals of the meeting, agenda, and other requirements.

Goals of the Meeting

As a first step, determine your goals for meeting with representatives of CILs. What are the desired results of the meeting? Examples of relevant goals could include the following:

- Participants walk away with concrete examples of how they can collaborate in the future to improve service delivery and health outcomes for persons with disabilities under the jurisdiction of the LHD.
- Your health department has a clearer understanding of what CILs can do for you and how collaborating with a CIL will make your programs run more smoothly and be more accessible to people with disabilities.
- CILs have a better understanding of the services your health department offers, who to contact and how to get in touch.
- Prior to meeting, review and provide participants the Partnership Guide for Centers for Independent Living and State and Local Health Departments and associated resources.

Detailed Agenda and Instructions

Once you've established your goals for the meeting, develop the meeting agenda using the sample below to guide you, which outlines session objectives, instructions, and information to be presented.

I. Participant Introduction

Objective: Introduce the participants.

Instructions and information to be presented: Introduction of participants, hosts, and organizations.

II. Introduction

Objective: Explain the purpose of the meeting.

Instructions and information to be presented: The introduction should explain the purpose of the meeting and the specific issues that should be addressed. Be sure to emphasize the role that CILs can play in assisting LHDs (e.g., lending expertise in identifying and addressing gaps in service delivery for persons with disabilities in the local community.)

III. Discuss Previous Collaborations

Objective: Discuss previous collaboration between the CIL and LHDs.

Instructions and information to be presented: Lead a discussion about past partnerships between the CIL and your or other health departments. Be prepared to discuss what worked well for your health department in previous partnership activities and what barriers you encountered.

Potential discussion questions to include:

- Have you been involved in partnerships with our health department or others before?
- What types of projects?
- What were the goals of each project?
- Were the goals achieved as envisioned? On time?
- What worked well during this partnership?
- What challenges did you encounter?
- What were the lessons learned?

IV. Discuss Future Partnership Opportunities

Objective: Develop ideas for future partnership opportunities.

Instructions and information to be presented: Lead a discussion about future partnership opportunities.

Potential questions to ask include:

- How could we partner together in the future?
- What are you interested in doing?
- Do you have specific goals you wish to achieve?
- Is there a way to collaborate on that initiative?

V. Develop Concrete Next Steps for Collaboration

Objective: Create concrete next steps for collaboration between the CIL and your health department.

Instructions and information to be presented: Once you and the CIL representative have decided on one or two partnership opportunities, lead a discussion on the concrete next steps the organizations can take and who is responsible for which actions. Possible action items include:

- Identify potential partners and stakeholders for the proposed project(s).
- List current and needed resources.
- Establish a calendar of regular meetings to ensure progress.

VI. Closing

Objective: Conclude the session.

Instructions and information to be presented: Wrap up the session and have participants decide on a date and time for the next meeting, if possible. Remember to thank the participants for their time.

Meeting Follow-up

Send out notes from the meeting to all participants with action items and dates noted. Include participants' contact information and their role in all proposed collaborations. Remind participants about the date and location (or platform/log-in information if virtual) of the next meeting.

Accessibility Requirements

Remember to ensure the session and any presentations given are accessible to all participants. This includes having an ASL interpreter, reading the text on slides and describing any graphics used. In addition, ensure that the physical space for the meeting, if in person, has:

- Curb cuts, ramps, and elevators
- Adequate spacing between furniture and removal of tripping hazards
- Availability of necessary equipment, such as wheelchairs

Please refer to Module Two of the Partnership Guide for more information on accessibility requirements.

Language Best Practices

Remember to show respect for participants and the individuals they serve through the language that you use. Keep in mind that many people in the disability community prefer identity-first language (e.g., an autistic person) instead of people-first language (e.g., a person with autism) which is being widely used in public health including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Remember, the best way to determine how to refer to a group of people with disabilities in a specific circumstance is to ask - so discuss with the CIL representative the appropriate language to use for specific purposes. When developing materials, message testing with audiences can also ensure that materials will be well-received.

Please refer to Module Two of the Partnership Guide for information on plain and inclusive language. CDC also created a set of [Health Equity Guiding Principles for Inclusive Communication](#) that can be referenced when communicating with and about people with disabilities.

Acronym List

Below is a list of commonly used acronyms related to working with CILs as a reference:

- ACL – Administration for Community Living
- ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act
- CIL – Center for Independent Living
- ILRU – Independent Living Research Utilization at the Texas Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (TIRR) Memorial Hermann
- SILC – Statewide Independent Living Council
- SPIL – State Plan for Independent Living