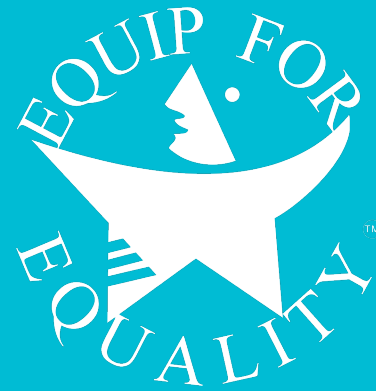


Intro to the Independent Client Assistance Program (CAP)

November 18, 2022



1

Equip For Equality

- ▶ Protection and Advocacy (P&A) system for the State of Illinois
- ▶ **Mission:** Advance the human & civil rights of people with disabilities in Illinois
- ▶ **Free legal assistance** for people with disabilities about issues related to their disability
- ▶ **Legal teams:** Civil Rights, Special Education, Abuse Investigations

Voice: 800.537.2632 TTY: 800.610.2779
www.equipforequality.org



2

2

Client Assistance Program (CAP)



- ▶ **CAP:** Established by the Rehabilitation Act
- ▶ **What CAP does, generally:**
 - ▶ Helps people who apply for or receive services under the Rehabilitation Act, including vocational rehabilitation and independent living services
 - ▶ Advises and informs people about their rights under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- ▶ Across the country, most CAPs are housed outside of state government; many within the state P&A
- ▶ As of **July 1, 2022**, CAP was redesignated from within DRS to **Equip for Equality (EFE)**

3

3

CAP Advocacy Team (as of November 2022)



Rachel Weisberg

- ▶ CAP Director, Managing Attorney

Sarah Huttenlocher – Staff Attorney

- ▶ CAP Advocate, Staff Attorney

Megan Sorey – Staff Attorney

- ▶ CAP Advocate, Staff Attorney

Emily Wilson – Staff Attorney

- ▶ CAP Advocate, Staff Attorney
- ▶ *Focus on youth and transition*

4

4



Training Agenda

- ▶ An Overview of:
 - ▶ Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)
 - ▶ Centers for Independent Living (CIL), and
 - ▶ Client Assistance Program (CAP)
- ▶ Explain the Role of CAP
- ▶ Outline the process and what clients can expect when they call CAP
- ▶ Share resources available

5

5



The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

Work in partnership with people with disabilities and their families to assist them in making informed choices to achieve full community participation through employment, education, and independent living opportunities.

- ▶ The **Division of Rehabilitative Services** is an adult service agency housed within the Illinois Department of Human Services
- ▶ DRS provides both home services support and vocational rehabilitation (VR) support.

6

6



Who is eligible for DRS services?

To qualify for DRS services an individual must:



*This includes high school and transition students who need assistance in preparing to enter the workforce or are looking for part time work experiences.

7

7



Examples of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services

- Job training and job coaching
- Assistance with finding a job
- Paying for supplies needed for employment, i.e. uniform, tools, licensure fees, etc.
- Paying for college or another training program
- Providing Assistive Technology
- Paying for Vocational Evaluations
- Providing Independent Living support (transportation and housing)

8

8



Getting Connected with DRS

- ▶ Find the local office [online](#) based on county and zip code
- ▶ Call your office or fill out [online referral form](#).
- ▶ Typical wait time is 2 weeks for initial contact from DRS to discuss application after submitting referral

9

9



CIL: Centers for Independent Living

Provide resources, advocacy, and support to help people with disabilities pursue goals to be independent and participate in your community.

- CILs are designed and operated by individuals with disabilities
 - ▶ 51% staff and board members at CILs must be individuals with disabilities
 - ▶ Funded through the Rehabilitation Act, same as with DRS VR services
- CILs assist with:
 - **Advocacy**
 - **Independent living skills** (budgeting, mobility training, managing personal assistants for home services program)
 - **Peer support**
 - **Information and referral**
 - **Transition support** (moving from nursing homes into the community; services for transition-aged youths; helping individuals at risk of institutionalization; assisting formerly incarcerated individuals)

10

10



Additional CIL Services

- Housing assistance
- Transportation assistance - e.g., paratransit services
- Employment services
- Public benefits counseling
- Assistive technology
- Legal services
- Grassroots/community organization to address systemic issues impacting the disability community on local, state, and national levels



You can find a client's CIL based on their county at CIL at <https://www.incil.org/locate/>

Independent CAP at EFE



Helping DRS Applicants & Customers (1)



CAP Role: Provide information, advice and advocacy for people applying for or receiving VR services

Examples of client cases:

- ▶ Person wants to work and is looking for services to help
- ▶ Person can't figure out how to open a referral for DRS services
- ▶ Person created a referral but no one from DRS has followed up

13

13

Helping DRS Applicants & Customers (2)



More examples of client cases:

- ▶ Person is found ineligible for DRS services
- ▶ Person disagrees with goals in IPE
- ▶ Person and DRS do not agree on what is needed for someone to meet their employment goals
- ▶ DRS counselor does not communicate effectively with customer
- ▶ DRS closes a person's file

14

14

Helping DRS Applicants & Customers (3)



CAP - Beyond Disagreements

- ▶ There does not need to be a "conflict" for CAP to get involved
- ▶ We can also help someone understand their rights to DRS services or tips for self-advocacy

15

15

Systemic Initiatives



CAP Role: Identify and advocate to overcome systemic barriers to competitive, integrated employment

How we plan to do this:

- ▶ Participate on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)
- ▶ Learn from experiences representing individual VR customers
- ▶ Learn from experiences representing applicants and employees with disabilities across Illinois
- ▶ **Listen to you!** Please share your observations

16

16

Title I of the ADA

CAP Role: Provide information and advice under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act

How we can help:

- ▶ Answer your questions about disability disclosure, reasonable accommodations, challenge discrimination
- ▶ Help write requests for an accommodation
- ▶ Help brainstorm solutions if individuals encounter a difficult employer



17

17

Transition Services

CAP Role: Provide information and advice to assist DRS customers and potential applicants in accessing VR services while in school

How we can help:

- ▶ Help youth and their families get connected with Pre-ETS or DRS services in their community
- ▶ Answer your questions about special education transition services
- ▶ Help you advocate for appropriate transition services in school that allow your child to access VR services



18

18

Helping Applicants & Consumers of CIL Services



CAP Role: Provide information and advice to assist applicants and consumers of independent living services seeking help from the CIL

- ▶ Limited to services funded by the Rehabilitation Act
- ▶ Some services we can help individuals access include:
 - ▶ Housing assistance
 - ▶ Advocacy support
 - ▶ Assistance finding a personal services worker

19

19

What Happens when you call CAP?



20

20

What to Expect When Calling CAP (1)



- ▶ Similar to other EFE services
- ▶ Callers leave a voicemail with name and contact information (either phone or email)
- ▶ We do our best to call back as soon as possible
- ▶ An EFE/CAP staff member will follow-up to conduct an initial intake call
- ▶ Intake call
 - ▶ Ask background demographic questions (ex: address, date of birth)
 - ▶ Ask about situation - why led caller to reach out
 - ▶ Ask about goals - what is caller trying to accomplish

21

21

What to Expect When Calling CAP (2)



- ▶ In limited situations, might answer questions on-the-spot; when then follow-up with advice in writing
- ▶ More often, CAP advocate will bring issues to CAP legal team for discussion - and then follow-up with caller
- ▶ **CAP directive:** Lowest level of intervention needed

22

22

Other EFE Services



23

Highlight: Two New(ish) Programs



Legal Assistance Removing Re-Entry Barriers

- ▶ With funding from Access 2 Justice, we are helping people with disabilities overcome barriers to re-entry from jail or prison
- ▶ Ruben Bautista, ruben@equipforequality.org

Training on Cannabis Legalization and Expungement

- ▶ Provide free training seminars on the new Illinois cannabis legalization law and how to expunge cannabis criminal records
- ▶ Funding from the Illinois Equal Justice Foundation
- ▶ Barry Taylor, barryt@equipforequality.org

24

24

Employment Rights Helpline



- ▶ For job seekers and employees with disabilities
- ▶ Helpline staff can:
 - ▶ **Discuss** employee rights under the ADA
 - ▶ **Answer** employment rights questions
 - ▶ Assist with **reasonable accommodations**
 - ▶ Help callers understand their **options**
 - ▶ Share **fact sheets, sample letters and forms**
 - ▶ Give **referrals** and other assistance as needed

Voice: **844.744.4879** TTY:**800.610.2779**
www.equipforequality.org/employment
employment@equipforequality.org

25

25

Special Education Clinic



To help students with disabilities secure a free appropriate public education. Anyone with a special education concern or question can call our statewide helpline for assistance.

The Clinic Provides:

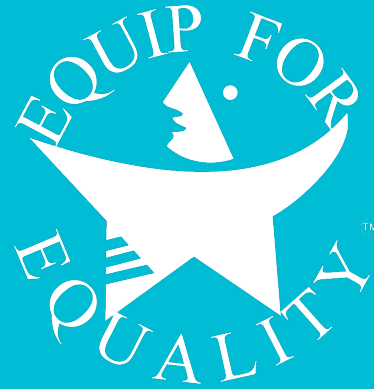
- ▶ Self-Advocacy Assistance
- ▶ Sample Letters and Forms
- ▶ Trainings to Interested Groups
- ▶ Legal Advocacy, in Select Cases

866-543-7046
<https://www.equipforequality.org/issues/special-education/special-ed@equipforequality.org>

26

26

Available CAP Resources



27

Self-Advocacy Resources



Fact sheets, sample letters and worksheets (Coming soon!)

- ▶ Topics: Understanding the VR process, self-advocacy tips, Title I (disclosure, accommodations, filing charges), Transition
- ▶ Plan: Available in English, Spanish & ASL (other languages to come)
- ▶ www.equipforequality.org/cap

**If there are common questions you hear or issues that we should develop resources for, please let us know.*

28

28

Trainings

- ▶ Monthly one-hour trainings
 - ▶ Recorded and posted to website
- ▶ Calendar is available on CAP website
 - ▶ November 18: Introduction to CAP
 - ▶ December 2, 12:00-1:00: Changing Workplace Rules to Do Your Job Well – Reasonable Accommodations
 - ▶ January 6, 12:00-1:00: Understanding Your Right to DRS Services During High School – Transition Services

www.equipforequality.org/cap



29

29

How to reach CAP

CAP at Equip for Equality

- ▶ www.equipforequality.org/cap
- ▶ **1-855-ILCAP-25 (855-452-2725)**
- ▶ cap@equipforequality.org



30

30

Questions?

