

LINKING EMPLOYMENT, ABILITIES & POTENTIAL (LEAP)

THE DORIS BRENNAN CENTER FOR DISABILITY EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

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DESCRIPTION: The Doris Brennan Center for Disability Education and Advocacy responds to disability-related policies and practices affecting the employment and independent living of people with disabilities. All of our services and advocacy activities are geared toward supporting and enhancing the employment and independent living aspirations of people with disabilities and creating improved public awareness of their issues, concerns and needs.

GOALS:

- To provide services to individuals with significant disabilities to assist them to function more independently in family, work and community settings, and
- To advocate for and promote changes in legislation and policies to include opportunities for full inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life.

SERVICES:

I. COMMUNITY LIVING

▪ **Independent Living Skills Training**

Independent living skills training assists persons with disabilities to improve their ability to live as independently and healthy as possible in the community. Independent Living services facilitate the development and achievement of independent living goals selected by individuals with disabilities which correspond to their personal and vocational goals.

- IL Assessment
- IL skills training

▪ **Low Vision Program (Lorain County)**

- Allows maximum independence and safety in the home and community through technology and adaptive skills by providing individuals with services, products and training that will allow them to maintain or regain their independence.
- Low Vision Services:
 - Independent Living Evaluation
 - Assessment: Introduction to magnifiers and non-optical low vision products and services; Training in appropriate use of low vision aids, Training in effective use of residual vision; Clinical low vision evaluation referrals
 - Rehabilitation Teaching: Training and education in adapted daily living skills in home management, health management, communications and personal adjustment; orientation and mobility services; work site analysis
 - Prevention Services: Vision education presentations, consultation/referral services

▪ **Community Inclusion**

- Quantum LEAP Socialization/Sports/Recreation Program
 - Offered at various locations on Cleveland's east side

II. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

▪ **Personal Adjustment - Work/Life Balance**

- Self Determination Training for Self Sufficiency - Peers with disabilities provide individual and group training on work/life issues such as:
 - Personal Management: Self awareness/disability management, stress management, conflict and anger management, setting goals and making decisions, time management, good health habits, preparing for natural disasters and other emergencies
 - Interpersonal Skills: Boundaries and personal space, assertiveness training, effective communication
 - Community Access: Understanding relationships, community resources, consumer protection, ADA and other rights, self-advocacy and systems change, leisure and recreation
 - Resource Management: Benefits management, directing Personal Care Assistants, use of assistive technology, budgeting/money management, home management
 - Employment Success: Preparing for work, social skills in the workplace, productivity and quality expectations, safety on the job, family responsibilities, handling work/life stressors, understanding workplace laws
 - Travel Orientation/Route Training: Short-term comprehensive instruction designed to teach persons with disabilities how to travel safely and independently, to and from a regularly visited destination, on public transportation.
 - Work Smart/Dress Smart: Assists consumers in selecting appropriate interview/work attire. Individualized support and personalized attention is provided to assist consumers in making their first impression their best.

▪ **Employment Supports**

- Housing
 - Advocacy for affordable, accessible and safe housing for persons with disabilities
- Transportation
 - Access to public and private transportation for individuals with disabilities includes travel training, coordination of transportation resources, awareness and access to services, and understanding transportation rights
- **Drivers License Written Test Preparation:** Individualized study plan covering Ohio's driving laws and signs to prepare an individual for the written test in order to obtain an Ohio Temporary Driver's Permit. Skill training is typically provided twice per week for 6 weeks.

▪ **Disability Benefits Assistance - Income Supports**

- SSA disability benefits assistance: Provision and explanation of accurate Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits information
- Assistance with ODMRDD waiver and ODJFS waiver management
- Assessment of the potential impact of wages, waivers, and/or other changes on eligibility for Federal and State benefits and overall financial well-being
- Assistance with resources to promote self-sufficiency such as food stamps, housing, child care, Medicaid, Medicaid Buy-in, transportation
- Education regarding comprehensive benefits monitoring and management
- Information and assistance in understanding the potential impact of changes in life situations, and guidance regarding the effects of various work incentives
- Disability determination assistance: assists individuals who have experienced difficulty in securing disability related benefits
- Peer support and advocacy
- Intervening in disputes relating to benefits and service entitlements covering food stamps, disability assistance, Medicaid and Social Security and facilitate access to Vocational Rehabilitation, housing, transportation, etc.

- Develop increased self-esteem and assertive behavior by recognizing abilities through peer support group sessions
 - **Disability Benefits Assistance Maintenance**
 - **Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) Development:** PASS is a long term Social Security work incentive that allows a person to set aside income to finance a work goal, i.e. starting a business, purchasing a vehicle for work.
 - **PASS Maintenance Services:** A PASS requires much follow-through on the part of the beneficiary.
- **Personal Care Assistance and Management**
 - Coordinated through Attendant Training Program Services

III. DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

- Information and Referral Services
- Awareness, Assistance and Access
 - Helps people with disabilities make informed decisions about their service and support options and serves as the entry point to the long-term support system of a wide range of in-home, community-based, and institutional services and programs that are designed to help individuals with disabilities

IV. COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

- Public Education
 - ADA training, accessibility studies, disability awareness/sensitivity training
- Employer Education
 - Hiring persons with disabilities and reasonable accommodation training to businesses and agencies
 - Community awareness and educational activities regarding:
 - Disability Rights Policy:
 - The American's With Disabilities Act (ADA); The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; Section 504; The Workforce Investment Act (WIA); The Fair Housing Act as amended; The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
 - Medicaid Buy-in/Ticket to Work
 - Medicaid, Medicare, health services
 - Nursing home transition
 - Personal assistance services
 - Homeland security/emergency preparation
 - Peer mentoring training
 - Social Security disability determination
 - School to work transition

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LEAP is a Center for Independent Living funded in part by the US Department of Education under *The Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended. We promote the independent living philosophy of consumer control, self-determination, peer support, self-help and self-advocacy, systems advocacy, and equal access to society which leads to empowerment, independence, inclusion and maximized leadership.