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The Montana Legislature is now back in session, which means that we need your help to ensure that programs and services that thousands of Montanans with disabilities rely on every day remain intact and adequately funded. As always, Summit will be working with Montana's other CIL's to track legislation pertaining to people with disabilities throughout the session and working to keep you informed of opportunities to lend your voice to the legislative process. If you would like to receive action notices and stay up to date on our legislative work, **please visit the Montana Association of Centers for Independent Living website at www.mtcil.org and sign up for the action alert listserv.**



comments received by the deadline will be distributed to all committee members. If you do request a Zoom link, you will still need to write a brief message containing the contents of your testimony in the event of technical difficulties so that your name will be entered into the record. Written testimony that is submitted after the deadline or submitted at the hearing will only be included in the minutes.

Rules of decorum must be followed and the Presiding Officer will call on you when it is your turn to speak. Follow the Zoom directions and raise your hand to let the Remote Committee Coordinator know

when you want to speak.

You may also contact legislators and even legislative committees via phone or through the Montana Legislative website's traditional web message form.

To leave a phone message for legislators, simply call (406) 444-4800, state your message to the person answering the phone and your message will be delivered to a legislator.

To send a website message, go to <https://leg.mt.gov/web-messaging>, select the legislature or committee you wish your message to go to, and click submit. These messages can be submitted at any time and will be delivered directly to the legislator or committee selected. Traditional ways of Accessing the Legislature Are Still Available!

Of course, you can also still attend legislative hearings in person should you so wish to do so. The public will be allowed to attend hearings at the capitol, but because of social distancing, you may only be allowed in the room when it is your time to testify and may not be able to stay in the room. You also may be required to wear a mask or face covering in the Capitol Building and in hearing rooms.

During this time of COVID-19, the Montana Legislature has implemented new, virtual options for providing written and in-person testimony during committee hearings in addition to the traditional methods of contacting legislators while in session.

In addition to the ability to contact legislators through the MTCIL Action Alert system, the **Montana Legislature has launched the "Have Your Say" page on the legislative website, which can be found at <https://leg.mt.gov/session/have-your-say/>**

Through the "Have Your Say" page, you will be able to select from the bills that are currently scheduled for hearing for the next 3 days.

By noon the day before the hearing, you will be able to upload and submit your written testimony, write a brief message, and request a Zoom link to testify during a bill hearing.

Once you've selected which bill you want to testify on, simply fill out the form with the pertinent details, including a request for the hearing's Zoom link, and submit. You will then receive an email confirmation. Even if you do not want to testify live via zoom, you can still submit written comments on this page. Written



COVID-19 Vaccine Information in Plain Language



What is COVID-19?



It is a short way of saying Coronavirus Disease 2019. Its nickname is Coronavirus. It is a terrible virus making people sick all around the world. Getting this virus is bad for you.

What is a vaccine?

A vaccine is medicine. It usually comes in a shot. It protects you from getting sick. Each vaccine protects you from one illness. For example, the flu vaccine protects you from getting the flu. It does not protect you from getting a cold.

Important!

The government works hard to make sure vaccines are safe. You have probably had many vaccines in your life. Most of them are given when someone is a baby. Getting a vaccine is good for you.

What To Know About The COVID-19 Vaccine?

Many COVID-19 vaccines are being made. Most require you to get 2 shots. You get the second shot 3 to 4 weeks after you got the first one. The second shot is like a booster shot. It is important for you to get both shots for the vaccine to work. The vaccine is free.

It takes time to make enough vaccine for everybody.

Your state decides when you can get the vaccine.

Doctors and nurses will get the vaccine first. Then elders and people with certain health problems like diabetes or heart disease will get the vaccine. Ask your doctor if you have questions about when it will be your turn to get the vaccine.



Talk to your doctor about what will happen when you get the COVID-19 vaccine. There are some side effects.

For example:

- Your arm will be sore where you get the shot (just like when you get a flu shot).
- You might feel tired or have a fever after you get the shot.

You get the vaccine at the places where you get a flu shot.

Always get your second shot even if you had side effects. You need both shots for the vaccine to work.

Will I need to wear a mask after I get a vaccine shot?

YES! You must wear a mask and follow social distancing rules after you get the vaccine. It takes time for the vaccine to build up in your body. It might take 2 months until the vaccine protects you from getting sick.

We all must keep wearing masks. Doctors will tell us when it is safe to be in public without a mask.



COVID-19 Vaccine Information continued...

Your state has a plan to make sure these groups of people get the vaccine as soon as possible.

- If you tested positive for COVID-19 that means you got the virus. Talk with your doctor about getting the vaccine.



Call the Disability Rights office in your state if you think your rights are being violated in getting your COVID-19 vaccine. You can find one near you at:
<https://www.ndrn.org/about/ndrn-memberagencies/>

Other details:

- For now, the vaccine is not for children.
- Some younger and healthy adults might have to wait until spring to get the vaccine. The goal is for everybody to get a vaccine by June.
- The people who are more likely to get COVID-19 include: people of color, elders, and people with certain health problems like diabetes or heart disease.

Links to reliable information related to COVID-19

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

<https://www.coronavirus.gov>

World Health Organization:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/covid>

Social Security and COVID- 19:

<https://www.ssa.gov/coronavirus/>

The ADA and Face Mask Policies:

<https://www.adasoutheast.org/ada/publications/legal/ada-and-face-mask-policies.php>

Your Local County or Tribal Health Department:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/FCSS/countytribalhealthdepts>

Kalispell CHEW classes just ZOOMed by!

The Kalispell office completed the final class in our Cost-effective Healthy Eating Workshop (CHEW) on November 24. This series of classes was made possible by a grant from the Gallagher Foundation. Originally, the classes were intended to be held in-person, once a week for 6 weeks, but because of the pandemic, all were held via the Zoom video platform. Five people took part in the workshop and enjoyed learning about healthy eating while on a budget. Erik Buck, a nutritional coach from Natural Grocers, also presented at one of the classes and compared the nutritional value of different foods. All recipes were pretty easy to prepare and affordable. Each participant will receive the recipe booklet in hard copy form. We hope to be able to do more classes like this in the future, so if you have an interest, please call us at (406)257-0048.



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Service Update

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Summit continues to provide independent living services by phone, email, and virtual means since we have not yet opened our offices to the public. We are monitoring COVID-19 activities in our local communities closely but are proceeding slowly with plans to gradually reopen our offices out of an abundance of caution. Many of Summit's staff members are at elevated risk for Covid-19, as are the individuals with disabilities who we serve.

We are happy to announce that Summit has received grant funding through the **CARES Act** to provide **additional independent living services** to people with disabilities in our service area who have been impacted by COVID-19. These services include access to affordable and accessible housing, transitioning from institutions or nursing homes into the community, access to necessary technology, improving safety and independence, and access to PPE ...

For more information or questions regarding eligibility, contact your local Summit office in Missoula, Hamilton, Ronan or Hamilton.

Visit www.summitilc.org/contact for local Summit office contact information.

Summit Mental Health Counseling

These are unprecedented times, and Summit Independent Living is in the position to extend more services. Summit can provide time limited, solution focused mental health counseling at no cost during this pandemic. Our staff include individuals with Masters Degrees in Social Work, who operate under a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. In order to work within our areas of competence, we may need to refer to another mental health specialist outside of our agency.

Please contact Chris Clasby for more information at cclasby@summitilc.org or 406-728-1630 ext.115.

Summit Virtual Social Security Orientation Schedule 2021

If you need assistance applying for disability benefits, we ask that you take part in a Social Security orientation prior to scheduling your appointment.

Orientations are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM.

2nd Thursday Monthly Schedule

Meeting URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89388805948?pwd=Zy9lQjduVEVhUlkxWmZUcTZKVHp0UT09>

Join by phone: 1 (669) 900-9128

Meeting ID: 893 8880 5948

Passcode: 705752

4th Thursday Monthly Schedule

Meeting URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86789824245?pwd=RkwzYnMlRU9pdC9ob2wyb2xmTVllZ09>

Join by phone: 1 (253) 215-8782

Meeting ID: 867 8982 4245

Passcode: 165841

Date	Time
February 11, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
March 11, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
April 8, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
May 13, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
June 10, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
July 8, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
August 12, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
September 9, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
October 14, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
November 11, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
December 9, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM

Date	Time
January 28, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
February 25, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
March 25, 2021	11:00 PM-12:30 PM
April 22, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
May 27, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
June 24, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
July 22, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
August 26, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
September 23, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
October 28, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM
November 25, 2021	(CANCELED/HOLIDAY)
December 23, 2021	11:00 AM-12:30 PM

For more information please go to www.summitilc.org or call your local office.

Missoula: 406-728-1630

Ronan: 406-215-1604

Hamilton: 406-363-5242

Kalispell: 406-257-0048

Telecommunication Equipment Loans

How will you monitor the upcoming legislative session or communicate with policy-makers if you're unable to safely travel to Helena? With a little planning, MonTECH can loan you the devices (and internet connection) you need to participate.

MonTECH and the Montana Family to Family Health Information Center partnered to pursue \$15,000 in CARES Act funding to support telehealth in Montana. The money has been used to purchase telecommunication equipment, now available for you to borrow!



Any Montanan living with a physical or cognitive challenge (including learning disability) can borrow lap tops, iPads, headsets with mics, and adaptive keyboards and mice. Nervous about speaking? You can borrow a communication device from MonTECH and record your message in advance. MonTECH also loans mobile Jetpack Hotspots. If you have cell service in your area but don't have WIFI (or your WIFI is sketchy), Jetpack allows you to connect your device and get online.

Borrow these items for 30-60 days at a time. Use them to improve your access to online conferences, remote learning, telehealth appointments, and yes, participation in the political process! Shipping and return shipping are free. If you don't know what you need or how to use these devices, our team offers free 1:1 help.

Call Michelle for more information: (406) 243-5486.

(Program funded by the Family Voices 2020 CARES Act Telehealth Mini-grant.)

**Mon
TECH**

f²f
Montana
family to family
Health Information Center



SUMMIT BOARD

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BASE EVENTS

725 West Alder, #4 Missoula, MT

BASE stands for home base, like in hide and go seek. In life, you have to establish a BASE first, that's where we come in.

BASE Virtual Activities

YODA (You Opening Doors through Advocacy)
Tuesdays 4-5:30pm on Zoom

All Abilities Yoga
Wednesdays 4-5pm on Zoom

BASE Wrestling Foundation BWF
Wednesday every other week 5-6pm
(next meeting 1/16 and 1/20)
On Zoom and Facebook

Audio Book Club
Will be Resuming in the Spring

BASE Virtual Game Night
Thursday from 1 pm to 4 pm. Join us for Trivia and chatting

BASEment Improv
Thursdays BASEment Improv 5-6:15pm. Join us for Improv games and laughs.

Role Playing Games RPG
To sign up for a New Dungeons and Dragons 5E game.
Message BASE Missoula or Email John at jhoward@summitilc.org

Photography Group coming soon.

For BASE schedule updates and additional events go to

www.summitilc.org/calendar

or check the BASE Facebook page at
<https://www.facebook.com/base725>

To get involved or to share ideas of new BASE programs, contact BASE

jhoward@summitilc.org or mbeers@summitilc.org.

To donate go to: <https://goo.gl/80NWq7>

CLASSIFIED ADS

Silver Spring wheelchair ramp 10' L x 36" W

Made of high-strength light weight aluminum. \$297obo. Contact: tamera144@gmail.com or 406-363-4898

1997 Ford Econoline Wheelchair Accessible Van

Miles: 213,737
Call Twyla 231-818-0065

Victory 10 LX scooter

New! \$2500, Call or text Nina 880-2855

Smart Talker text scanner

Slightly used, \$700. Contact Larry at 406-633-4036 or ketch1969@gmail.com

Nova Walker, Quontum 600 power wheelchair, Commode, 2 Transfer Benches, Beezy Manual Wheelchair. Call Gary (406) 224-5527 or garylee032051@gmail.com

Symmetry Stander

Comfortable, easy-to-use seat stander Call Madison (406) 865-0221

Garaventa Super-Trac Portable Wheelchair Lift for stairs. Purchased new for \$12,000 and used only a few times. Will sell for \$2,500 OBO. Contact Jacob Francom, Troy Public Schools, jfrancom@troyk12.org, (406) 295-4520.

Acorn Stair lift

For going up to 6 stairs while seated. \$300 OBO. Call John at 546-7003.

To get listed contact Tyler Stosich at (406) 728-1630 or email tstosich@summitilc.org.

Or, list and find items on the MonTECH exchange:

<http://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/mtddb/>

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SUMMIT INDEPENDENT LIVING

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Building Awareness, Advocating Change

THE SUMMIT INDEPENDENT

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This publication is available in alternative format on request. Please call 1 (800) 398-9002.



Fresh Food Box

Summit Independent Living and Missoula Food Bank & Community Center are working collaboratively to make the Fresh Food Box program available to more people with disabilities.



Eligibility requirements:

- must have a physical or mental disability that impacts your ability to live independently;
- live in Missoula
- sign up for Summit service;
- be experiencing challenges to your health, safety, ability to live independently, receive vital services, gain or continue employment, or participate in community activities due to COVID-19;
- be experiencing food insecurity due to lack of income, and
- need home delivery of food due to sheltering in place or lack of transportation/assistance to obtain food in the community.

For more information or to apply please call the Summit office at 406-728-1630 or send an email to missoula@summitilc.org.



You can always sign up to get this newsletter by email by visiting www.summitilc.org and signing up