



RESOURCE CENTER FOR ACCESSIBLE LIVING

Your Independence is our Mission

OUR ORGANIZATION INFORMATION:

Address: 727 Ulster Avenue
Kingston, NY 12401

Hours: Monday – Friday
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Phone: 845-331-0541 (Main)
845-331-4527 (TTY)
845-331-2076 (Fax)

Area Served: Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, and Columbia Counties

Languages: English, Spanish, American Sign Language, Interpreter can be provided

Overview:

Our Mission is to assist people with disabilities open the doors of opportunity and independence in the Ulster County region through self-determination by creating understanding and awareness, and access community-wide.

Our vision is to create a fully accessible, integrated community without barriers for people with disabilities, and to assist and empower individuals with disabilities to live independently and participate in all aspects of community life.

In Other Words:

RCAL assists persons with disabilities to live in the community in the most integrated setting possible. Providing services or the access to the services needed.

OUR SERVICES:

Architectural Barrier Removal and Accessibility Code Consultation:

The foundation for inclusion and independence for everyone is accessibility and RCAL's Home Modification Service can assist home owners, landlords, and businesses make their property safe and accessible for individuals with disabilities. The Consultant can provide professional on-site surveys, detailed information on cost effective modifications, extensive product and vendor listings, and funding resources. Consulting services and assistance for issues involving building access for persons with disabilities including compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the NYS Building Code. Previously, **RCAL** has assisted with advising Kingston Parks and Recreation Department on how to make the renovation of Kingston Point Beach completely accessible; advising the Art Society of Kingston on how to make their front entrance, upstairs gallery and performance space completely accessible; advising the NYS DOT in accessibility parameters for their NYS Park and Ride area renovations; design recommendations to the Town of Olive for their courtroom renovations and for the renovation of a ramp at one of the Town's polling places; advising on accessible hiking trails and an accessible Educational Center at the Mohonk Preserve. From a simple home project like the addition of a ramp, to a city wide plan for curb cuts and wheelchair access, our Consultant is ready to provide assistance. No project is too big or too small.



Benefits Advisement:

RCAL's Benefits Advisor is often the first step an individual takes when exploring what options are available to them in order to gain employment, select the best Medicare plans, or access Medicaid.

When a disability occurs unexpectedly, our Benefits Advisor can assist an individual with determining what benefits are appropriate and what to apply for. They can explain the criteria for qualifying and then assist the individual through the application process. The Advisor can also assist with denials, spousal refusals, Special Need and Pooled Trusts. **RCAL's** Benefits Advisor is here to help the individual navigate their way through the various programs and pick the unique combination that best meets their needs.

Returning to work with a disability can often be confusing and concerning when trying to maintain medical coverage and benefits. The list of programs available is long and confusing: Social Security's Work Incentives for recipients who return to work, Disability Benefits, Social Security, Supplemental Income, Disability Income, SSI Benefit Calculation, Impairment Related Work Expenses, Job Subsidies, Trial Work Months, Extended Period of Eligibility, Expedited Reinstatement, Ticket to Work, Overpayments, and PASS. The Advisor can assist by explaining the various programs available. The Advisor can also explain what the rules mean and how to navigate them to either segue-way off of benefits or balance and maintain benefits while making some extra money being employed.

If you have questions or concerns, please reach out and contact our Benefits Advisor for help.

Disability Awareness Education:

The program offers workshops, discussion groups, activities and other types of training that encourages individuals to be understanding and aware of all people living in the community. The program provides interactive activities that help the participants experience what it is like to have a disability, and share techniques for positive communication and interaction with people who have disabilities. Curriculum available for pre-kindergarten through adult.

Disability Information and Referral:

Information and Referral for people with disabilities and their families to the various services and supports available in the community is the cornerstone of what we do at **RCAL**. Assisting people to understand the various services available, the criteria for qualifying, and providing assistance when applying is the first step in gaining independence and inclusion for many of the individuals that contact us.

Durable Medical Equipment Loan Closet:

Our Equipment Loan Closet has been going strong for 30 years. We loan durable medical equipment to individuals for a nominal fee. The loan closet has become a very important resource for individuals in C:\Users\zmahan\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\5GN7NAGC\RCAL list of services updated 1.2019.docx



the community who cannot afford to buy their own piece of equipment, if their insurance does not cover the cost, or the need is short term for a visiting relative or friend. The donated equipment is loaned for a 3 month period of time and can be renewed. No one is turned away because they cannot afford the fee. Some examples of available equipment include: wheelchairs, portable ramps, walkers, commodes, shower chairs and canes. Our inventory is ever changing; call to see if we have what you need.

Employment Services:

Our Employment Specialists assist individuals with disabilities with the development of an Individualized Employment Plan and then provide the necessary level of support for that individual in the workplace. Employment Services can assist individuals through various programs through ACCES-VR or the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) such as: Supported Employment, Youth Employment, Employee Training, and Pre-Vocational Skills. The Employment Specialists assist the individual with meeting their employment goals. Programming is based on the individual's needs.

Health Home Care Management:

The Health Home Care Management Program provides coordinated care and support for people with complex medical or mental health issues that utilize Medicaid. Care Managers work with the individual on setting and meeting goals in all aspects of their life: attending medical appointments, doing recommended follow-up, housing, employment goals etc. The plans are individualized to meet the person's unique needs. By coordinating individual's medical needs, we help avoid unnecessary hospital admissions and ER visits which results in lower Medicaid costs for the community.

Nursing Home Transition and Diversion Waiver Program (NHTD):

The NHTD Program offers individuals needing nursing home level of care a way to live in the community instead of a facility or avoid nursing home placement in the first place. The premise of the program is that individuals are happier when they live in their own homes and the cost is lower when individuals are not housed in facilities. Participants must have Medicaid to qualify. In addition to regular Medicaid benefits this program offers a wide range of special services such as: service coordination to help the individual access necessary services, the opportunity to work with a trainer 1:1 to relearn skills (using a left hand instead of a right hand after a stroke), staffing up to 24/7 for an individual with memory issues to make sure they stay safe, and access to a counselor for participants and their families to overcome fears about coming back to live in the community after many years of living in a facility or after an accident. Services are flexible, responsive, and tailored to the needs of the individual.

OPWDD Community Habilitation:

Community Habilitation provides a chance for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to experience and become involved in their own community with one on one support. Individuals choose activities and events which interest them and their Community Habilitation Staff teach, guide, and offer assistance as needed to help the individual achieve their desired outcomes.

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Community Habilitation provides an opportunity for individuals to increase their social skills and build relationships while increasing their independence in the community and at home. Individuals are given the opportunity to improve their skills in the areas they choose as a way to increase their readiness for community inclusion, to improve their home life and to remain safe and healthy. The program is goal driven and the goals are set by the individual.

OPWDD Respite:

OPWDD Respite provides relief to the individuals who are responsible for the primary care and support of an individual with a developmental disability. By supplying staff to come into the home, caregivers are given a break to do anything from going to get a haircut, to lunch with a friend, to a date night with a spouse or even to stay at home and do laundry. On average, caregivers request 8-10 hours per week to be able to keep things running at home and get some very needed time alone to refresh and recharge before going back to the 24/7 responsibilities of caring for their loved one.

Olmstead Housing Subsidy Program:

This rental subsidy program is intended to help seniors and people with disabilities leave nursing home or prevent nursing home placement by stabilizing their housing. The Housing Specialist works with individuals in nursing homes or individuals that have spent 120 consecutive days in a nursing home in the past 24 months to meet their housing needs. The Specialist also works to educate landlords about the program. The program is a rental subsidy designed to mirror Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers.

Open Doors Transition Program:

The Open Doors Transition Specialist helps individuals living in nursing homes and intermediate care facilities create a transition plan so they can move back into the community. An Individualized Transition Plan puts together the community supports necessary for the individual to live safely in the community. The Transition Specialist helps the individual and their family by insuring that appropriate services are accessed, approved, coordinated and implemented. Contact is maintained with the individual the first few months after discharge to make sure the transition plan and services are meeting their needs.

Representative Payee Program:

A Representative Payee is responsible for helping a Social Security Recipient to budget money and to disburse the individual's funds to pay for current needs including housing and utilities, food, medical expenses, and personal needs items. The Representative Payee Program assists people who would not otherwise be able to manage their funds to maintain living in the community. This program is for Social Security Recipients only.

Special Education Information and Advocacy:

Advocates are available to assist parents and family members understand a school district's

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responsibilities to students with disabilities and the regulations that govern Special Education and 504 Services. Advocates are also available to attend CSE meetings with parents. In addition to advocacy, our Special Education Advocates can provide Information and Referral regarding additional services, and supports available to students outside of school and to provide guidance to parents on how to access those services. If you know of a student in need of accommodations in order to get the most out of their education and need assistance, please reach out to our Special Education Advocates.

Special Education Workshops:

On a regular basis throughout the year, our Advocates present a Special Education Regulations Overview for parents and professionals to familiarize themselves with New York State regulations on Special Education. The workshop is a detailed "walk through" of the Special Education process. **RCAL** also offers Special Education Workshops throughout the year on additional topics for parents, professionals and school districts based on community feedback on topics of interest. In the past, topics have included interpreting psycho-educational evaluation results, transition planning for students transitioning from early intervention services to preschool services; preschool services to grade school services; and post high school planning to work or other educational opportunities.

Statewide Systems Advocacy Network (SSAN) Advocate:

Through the use of grass roots efforts the SSAN Advocate works with the community to bring advocacy for individuals with disabilities by presenting the issues to Government Representatives that can create legislation to better the quality of life for individuals with disabilities. The SSAN Advocate works to promote the philosophy of independent living, including consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, and advocacy at the local, state and federal levels. The SSAN Advocate uses strategies and methods to advocate for full inclusion for individuals with disabilities. The SSAN Advocate also provides support, assistance and advocacy for individuals and families needing help with issues relating to disabilities. July 26, 2015, **RCAL's** SSAN advocate, Keith Gurgui, received the National Council of Independent Living (NYCIL) Region II Annual Advocacy Award in Washington D.C. for his outstanding work. (NYCIL is the oldest and largest cross disability organization in the nation.)

Support Groups:

Our Peer led support groups provide a safe space for individuals to come together with others who are experiencing similar life situations. Facilitators assist group members with various skills, and finding useful sources of support depending on the needs of the individuals in the group. Current groups include: Amputee (Limb Loss of the Hudson Valley), Autism Social Skills, Hands on Communication: Sign Language, Alzheimer's Caregivers, and Traumatic Brain Injury. If you would like to start a group please let us know.