

# Reporting Instrument

OMB Approval No.: 0985-0061  
Expiration Date: February 28, 2025

## CIL Program Project Performance Report

Fiscal Year: 2022

Grant #: 2205GAILCL

Name of Center: Living Independence for Everyone, Inc.

Acronym for Center (if applicable): LIFE

State: GA

Counties Served: Appling (GA), Bacon (GA), Brantley (GA), Bryan (GA), Bulloch (GA), Camden (GA), Candler (GA), Charlton (GA), Chatham (GA), Effingham (GA), Evans (GA), Glynn (GA), Liberty (GA), Long (GA), McIntosh (GA), Pierce (GA), Tattnall (GA), Toombs (GA), Ware (GA), Wayne (GA)

# SECTION 1 - GENERAL FUNDING INFORMATION

Section 725(c)(8)(D) of the Act

Indicate the amount received by the CIL as per each funding source. Enter '0' for none.

## Item 1.1.1 - All Federal Funds Received

Title VII, Ch. 1, Part B	\$137135
Title VII, Ch. 1, Part C	\$304545
Title VII, Ch. 2	\$0
Other Federal Funds	\$52811
<b>Subtotal - All Federal Funds</b>	<b>\$494,491.00</b>

## Item 1.1.2 - Other Government Funds

State Government Funds	\$269915
Local Government Funds	\$0
<b>Subtotal - State and Local Government Funds</b>	<b>\$269,915.00</b>

## Item 1.1.3 - Private Resources

Foundations, Corporations, or Trust Grants	\$35972
Donations from Individuals	\$871
Membership Fees	\$105
Investment Income/Endowment	\$0
Fees for Service (program income, etc.)	\$13350
Other resources (in-kind, fundraising, etc.)	\$10623
<b>Subtotal - Private Resources</b>	<b>\$60,921.00</b>

## Item 1.1.4 - Total Income

Total income = (Item 1.1.1)+(Item 1.1.2)+(Item 1.1.3)	\$825,327.00
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## Item 1.1.5 - Pass Through Funds

Amount of other government funds received as pass through funds to consumers (include funds, received on behalf of consumers, that are subsequently passed on to consumers, e.g., personal assistance services, representative payee funds, or Medicaid funds)	\$0
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## Item 1.1.6 - Net Operating Resources

Total Income (Item 1.1.4) minus amount paid out to Consumers (Item 1.1.5) = Net Operating Resources	\$825,327.00
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## Item 1.2 - Resource Development Activities

Briefly describe the CIL's resource development activities conducted during the reporting period to expand funding from sources other than chapter 1 of title VII of the Act.

As with the time periods covered by the last 2 PPRs, LIFE chose to eschew in-person fundraisers in the fiscal year covered in this report. Unlike the prior years, this was no longer due primarily to Covid-related safety concerns, though LIFE remained vigilant about limiting close contact whenever possible. This year, the focus was on return on investment, as prior year yields for man hours invested simply did not support allocation of manpower when other, more fruitful opportunities presented themselves. As noted in last year's report, LIFE's Board and ED made a conscious choice to reallocate personnel through the creation of two positions with administrative responsibilities two years prior with the departure of the Development Director. The first, the position of the Associate Director, was tasked with internal supervision of staff efforts and needed supports while also running the home modification program, and a second one, the Program Director, focused on service delivery itself and training needs of LIFE staff. The Associate Director, Program Director, and Executive Director continued to meet weekly, bringing different perspectives to challenges and infusing decision-making with the insight of individuals providing services and the consumers with whom they worked. The Administrative Triumvirate, as the group was termed, focused on streamlining processes, delivering services efficiently and responding to fast-evolving community needs and innovative opportunities. This historically proved quite effective and remained so, as staff thrived with additional guidance to the benefit of LIFE's consumers.

When prior consultation with LIFE's outside accountant had demonstrated that efforts were more efficient through fee for service offerings than prior in-person fundraising, and the monetary yields had been larger, too, LIFE's Board and staff committed to this approach, and it stayed the course again in FY 2022.

LIFE's ED, cognizant of the winding down of much of the Covid-related funding, redoubled efforts around the efficient deployment of remaining funds and growing existing relationships to access additional funding opportunities. As one of the final Covid-era temporary funding programs remaining, the Public Health Workforce funding became a main point of emphasis. He tried to balance consumer and I&R needs, such as the ASL interpreter needed by a TravelAbility Conference attendee or additional consumer supports in the Home Mod and Nursing Home Transition programs delivered through the hiring of a Support Coordinator, with more long-term impacts, accessing professionals to train staff and build unique offerings hereto unavailable to LIFE consumers, like the Neurodiversity Is Beautiful support groups, all detailed in the PHWF section. Using data gathered during these efforts to show efficacy, LIFE will work to secure funding for next fiscal year and in the years to follow, ensuring a sustainable program even after the exhaustion of the PHWF funding during next reporting year.

Relationship-building efforts continued to benefit LIFE's income stream in FY22. A partnership initially formed through collaborations in the SE Vaccine Superhub group with Georgia State University's Center for Leadership in Disability led to additional opportunities. LIFE was chosen as one of 10 pilot sites in the United States for the Living Well in the Community (LWIC) rollout. The 10-week class, described in further detail Section 7.1 of this Report, benefited LIFE consumers while also securing LIFE an additional \$2500 of funding. This, coupled with LIFE's fee for service efforts staffing the Coastal ADRC AT lab in Darien once a week (\$9856) and LIFE's work with the Georgia Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing device training (\$994) comprised the Fee for Service total found in Item 1.1.3. However, LIFE's partnership yielded not only income and skills training for LIFE consumers but also future opportunities. After serving as adept facilitators of the LWIC program, not only was the

contract renewed for the following year with LIFE, but Georgia State approached the organization with another opportunity, the National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability's inclusive Community Implementation Process (NiCIP), building on the structured, peer support growth model of the LWIC program which sought improved individual health outcomes to expand the scope of efforts through development and deployment of systematically integrated strategies into health promotion programs that increase inclusion while maintaining the fidelity the program. In the reporting year to follow, LIFE signed contracts to facilitate LWIC as well as to deploy the NiCIP in its service area, offering additional Fee for Service opportunities.

Other examples of private resources developed through relationship building shown in Item 1.1.3 of this Report included: 1) volunteer labor (\$9285 worth) primarily associated with ramp building efforts of two volunteer contractor groups who have worked with LIFE for years; 2) a Women United grant for transportation, which LIFE became aware of through its involvement with UWCE, where LIFE's ED served on their Agency Executive Committee, where he offered directional guidance and learned more about their programs; 3) the remaining \$3872 of the National Fair Housing award which LIFE administered as a trusted community partner, a relationship which began with the distribution of funding in the Genesis settlement many years prior; and 4) the SILC arranged CareSource \$10,000 award that LIFE directed towards its home mod program.

Georgia Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing training \$994

ADRC \$9856

Amazon Smile \$39

# SECTION 2 - COMPLIANCE INDICATOR 1: PHILOSOPHY

## Item 2.1 - Board Member Composition

Enter requested governing board information in the table below:

Total Number of Board Members	Number of Board Members with Significant Disabilities
12	10

Percentage of Board Members with Significant Disabilities	83.00%
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## Item 2.2 - Staff Composition

Enter requested staff information in the table below:

	Total Number of FTEs	FTEs Filled by Individuals with Disabilities	FTEs Filled by Individuals From Minority Populations
Decision-Making Staff	2.9	2.9	0.9
Other Staff	5.2	5.1	1.1
Total Number of Employees	8.1	7.9	2.0

### Item 2.2.1 - Staff With Disabilities

Percentage of Staff Members with Significant Disabilities	98.00%
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# SECTION 3 - INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SERVICES

Section 704(m)(4)(D) of the Act; Section 725(b)(2) of the Act; Section 725(c)(8)(B) of the Act

## Item 3.1 - Number of Consumers Served During the Reporting Period

Include Consumer Service Records (CSRs) for all consumers served during the period

	# of CSRs
(1) Enter the number of active CSRs carried over from the preceding reporting period	62
(2) Enter the number of CSRs started since the start of the reporting period	79
(3) Add lines (1) and (2) to get the <b>total number of consumers served</b>	141

## Item 3.2 - IL Plans and Waivers

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Number of consumers who signed a waiver	0
(2) Number of consumers with whom an ILP was developed	141
(3) <b>Total number of consumers</b> served during the reporting period	141

## Item 3.3 - Number of CSRs Closed by September 30 of the Reporting Period

Include the number of consumer records closed out of the active CSR files during the reporting period because the individual has:

	# of CSRs
(1) Moved	1
(2) Withdrawn	8
(3) Died	0
(4) Completed all goals set	17
(5) Other	1
(6) Add lines (1)+(2)+(3)+(4)+(5) to get <b>total CSRs closed</b>	27

## Item 3.4 - Age

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Under 5 years old	0

	# of Consumers
(2) Ages 5 - 19	2
(3) Ages 20 - 24	5
(4) Ages 25 - 59	56
(5) Age 60 and Older	78
(6) Age unavailable	0
<b>Total number of consumers by age</b>	<b>141</b>

### Item 3.5 - Sex

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Number of Females served	92
(2) Number of Males served	49
<b>Total number of consumers by sex</b>	<b>141</b>

### Item 3.6 - Race And Ethnicity

Indicate the number of consumers served in each category below. ***Each consumer may be counted under ONLY ONE of the following categories in the PPR/704 Report, even if the consumer reported more than one race and/or Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.***

	# of Consumers
(1) American Indian or Alaska Native	0
(2) Asian	1
(3) Black or African American	98
(4) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
(5) White	34
(6) Hispanic/Latino of any race or Hispanic/ Latino only	5
(7) Two or more races	2
(8) Race and ethnicity unknown	1
<b>Total number of consumers served by race/ethnicity</b>	<b>141</b>

### Item 3.7 - Disability

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Cognitive	6
(2) Mental/Emotional	10
(3) Physical	87

	<b># of Consumers</b>
(4) Hearing	1
(5) Vision	18
(6) Multiple Disabilities	17
(7) Other	2
<b>Total number of consumers served by disability</b>	<b>141</b>

### **Item 3.8 - Individuals Served by County During the Reporting Period**

List each county within the CIL's service area, as indicated in the CIL's application for Part C funds and the approved SPIL. Add additional rows as necessary. For each county, indicate how many individuals residing in that county were served by the CIL during the reporting period.

<b>County Name</b>	<b>Number of County Residents Served</b>
Appling, GA	0
Bacon, GA	0
Brantley, GA	0
Bryan, GA	3
Bulloch, GA	6
Camden, GA	3
Chatham, GA	91
Effingham, GA	8
Evans, GA	2
Glynn, GA	8
Liberty, GA	9
McIntosh, GA	5
Tattnall, GA	1
Toombs, GA	5
Ware, GA	0
Wayne, GA	0
<b>Total number of consumers served by county</b>	<b>141</b>



# SECTION 4 - INDIVIDUAL SERVICES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

## Item 4.1 - Individual Services

For the reporting period, indicate in the table below how many consumers requested and received each of the following IL services.

Services	Consumers Requesting Services	Consumers Receiving Services
Advocacy/Legal Services	30	30
Assistive Technology	67	67
Children's Services	0	0
Communication Services	8	8
Counseling and related services	3	3
Family Services	8	8
Housing, Home Modification, and Shelter Services	73	73
IL Skills Training and Life Skills Training	32	32
Information and Referral Services	1053	1053
Mental Restoration Services	0	0
Mobility training	2	2
Peer Counseling Services	71	71
Personal Assistance Services	3	3
Physical Restoration Services	2	2
Preventive Services	25	25
Prostheses, Orthotics, and other appliances	0	0
Recreational Services	11	11
Rehabilitation Technology Services	8	8
Therapeutic Treatment	0	0
Transportation Services	24	24
Youth/Transition Services	28	28
Vocational Services	16	16
Other	0	0

## Item 4.2 - I&R Information

To inform ACL how many service providers engage in I&R follow-up contacts regarding access to transportation, health care services or assistive technology, please indicate the following:

The service provider did **X** / did not \_\_\_ engage in follow-up contacts with I & R recipients to document access gained to previously unavailable transportation, health care or assistive technology.

Describe how information and referral services and the other IL core and other IL services are provided to those who request such services in formats accessible to the individual requesting the services. Describe any innovative practices (not mentioned elsewhere in this report) to enhance the availability and effectiveness of IL services.

LIFE provided information and referral services to people with disabilities, and the community at large. This service included collecting community resources, sharing these resources, making referrals to the appropriate organizations/individuals, and sharing learned information through community education activities. LIFE staff learned about resources by attending community meetings, including Family Connections meetings for many of the 11 service counties, mental health meetings like Regional Community Collaboratives, and Aging and Disability Resource Collaboratives, where it was among the partner organizations for the advisory council for the Coastal Georgia and participated as a community partner in Heart of Georgia and Southern Georgia ADRC's meetings, providing additional access to resources in the community which could subsequently be passed along to individuals in need of assistance.

LIFE Staff created resource guides for all of its service counties and began linking to other organizations' resource guides through LIFE's website and social media to assist IL Coordinators with timely referrals. In order to better organize the resources, bring them up to date, and make them more accessible to anyone seeking to access LIFE affiliated digital media platforms, LIFE created the part-time position of Digital Media/Website Consultant (see PHWF description for further details). This individual, tasked exclusively with website and social media responsibilities, began to reorganize the information and laid out an outreach campaign to begin in October. The outreach campaign to service providers throughout the service area will involve LIFE IL Coordinators in the respective offices reaching out to collect the following information to be uploaded to the website in a more usable format: 1) Business Name; 2) Copy of Logo for use on website; 3) Physical Address; 4) Phone Number; 5) Website; 6) Services they provide; 7) Qualifications to Receive Services; 8) Counties of LIFE that they serve. This effort, assisted by the formatting suggestions from LIFE's Webhost, began in FY22 and will be finalized in the year that follows.

Additionally, LIFE staff refer individuals inquiring about resources to United Way 211, a database covering many of LIFE's counties which LIFE participates in as a United Way funded agency. This supplements the network of providers LIFE learns about through its community efforts.

LIFE has the ability to provide information in numerous formats including Braille, Large Print, and electronic copies, which LIFE provides upon request to consumers and community partners.

### **Item 4.3 - Peer Relationships and Peer Role Models**

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has promoted the development of peer relationships and peer role models among individuals with significant disabilities.

LIFE grounded its approach to service delivery in the peer relationship between staff members and consumers. LIFE staff was often deliberate in cultivating this relationship. However, it often also often formed organically during the initial casual conversations when an individual first contacted LIFE looking for information, since staff members with disabilities provided both consumer and I&R services. If the individual became a consumer and engaged in goal setting discussions, this relationship strengthened further as the parties got to know one another. Along with creating peer relationships

during the provision of service delivery, LIFE also promoted the development of peer relationships among staff, board, and volunteers. The following activities describe some additional ways in which LIFE promoted these relationships:

LIFE offered opportunities for people with disabilities to meet and network with other people with disabilities and learn about disability related activities, issues, and links through Facebook, including updates of our events and a link to our website with upcoming events and information.

Every LIFE newsletter, published quarterly, often featured a statement from a LIFE staff member describing what peer support meant to them. With the addition of the LIFE Social Club last year, LIFE provided an opportunity for PwD to interact in a more relaxed, less structured environment, promoting additional peer support opportunities to the existing IL Skills and Peer Support group meetings. A LIFE staff member participated in online peer support for a group with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome. The staff member, who has lived experience with the disorder and years of knowledge related to the daily challenges associated with it, offered a listening ear, empathy and resources when appropriate. The staff member benefited as well from mutual peer support in this setting as well.

One of LIFE's board members was a founding member of and serves on the Board of CEPASA (Coastal Empire Polio Survivors Association) and made monthly phone calls to provide peer support to assigned list of polio survivors.

LIFE's ED participated in Savannah Brain Injury Association of Georgia (BIAG) support group meetings; he also served as a Board member of BIAG and the Board Treasurer. He also continued in his role as the Vice President of the Southeast Center Directors' Association where he helped facilitate two SECDA meetings where Directors, all of whom had disabilities, engaged with one another in a variety of peer support discussions.

One of LIFE's Board members provided feedback to LIFE about his voting experience to ensure no barriers to access existed.

LIFE also promoted peer relationships through various events that we sponsored during the reporting year. LIFE regularly held 2-3 peer support meetings a month. These included discussions about personal experience handling specific situations as well as a regular, monthly Social Club offering that was less structured and often involved playing games. IL Skills Trainings usually involved peer support among participants towards the end of the session, where members could react to the training.

This FY, LIFE held 32 standalone peer support group meetings with a total of 258 participants (includes staff). LIFE staff scheduled and facilitated these meetings to remind individuals that they were not alone and to allow people opportunities to share in their successes as they become more independent. The meetings proved therapeutic. The topics were chosen after close consultation with potential participants. Individuals talked openly with one another, finding safety in a group of peers whose own experiences with their own disabilities allowed for empathic dialogue. Peer Support Group meeting themes this year included:

- 3D Art Project
- Hurricane Evacuation/Sheltering Experiences
- Handling Crowds
- Hobbies
- Gardening
- Making Friends
- Navigating Transportation
- Motivation
- Employment
- New Year's Resolutions

The fifteen IL Training groups that occurred throughout the year always involved peer discussion during and/or after the presentations. Another 174 people (includes staff) participated in these events. These topics were as follows:

- Disability Voter Education (2, one in 10/2022, one in 9/2023)

Assistive Technology  
 Employment Focus Group  
 Home Buyer Education  
 Tornado Preparedness and Heat Stroke Prevention  
 Disability Etiquette 411  
 Mental Health Awareness Month Workshop (facilitated by Lila Black, Rebekah Wood; see PHWF description)  
 Budgeting  
 Chat with Chatham Area Transit  
 Get Out and Grow (gardening)  
 Social Security Benefits and Return to Work  
 Cyber Safety Net (online safety)  
 Shopping on a Budget (2 installments)

**Item 4.4 - Goals Related to Increased Independence in a Significant Life Area**

Indicate the number of consumers who set goals related to the following significant life areas, the number whose goals are still in progress, and the number who achieved their goals as a result of the provision of IL services.

Significant Life Area	Goals Set	Goals Achieved	In Progress
Self-Advocacy/Self-Empowerment	6	1	4
Communication	2	1	1
Mobility/Transportation	27	12	14
Community-Based Living	58	16	38
Educational	12	3	7
Vocational	15	0	14
Self-Care	21	6	13
Information Access/Technology	22	15	6
Personal Resource Management	11	2	8
Relocation from a Nursing Home or Institution to Community-Based Living	27	17	8
Community/Social Participation	11	1	10
Other	0	0	0

**Item 4.5 - Improved Access To Transportation, Health Care Services, and Assistive Technology**

In column one, indicate the number of consumers who required access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting period. Of the consumers listed in column one, indicate in column two, the number of consumers who, as a result of the provision of IL services (including the four core services), achieved access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting period. In column three, list the number of consumers whose access to transportation, health care services or assistive technology is still in progress at the end of the reporting period.

Areas	# of Consumers Requiring Access	# of Consumers Achieving Access	# of Consumers Whose Access is in Progress
(A) Transportation	31	25	5
(B) Health Care Services	2	1	1
(C) Assistive Technology	32	19	13

Note: For most IL services, a consumer's access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology is documented through his or her CSR. In some instances, consumers may achieve an outcome solely through information and referral (I&R) services. To document these instances as successful outcomes, providers are not required to create CSRs for these consumers, but must be able to report that follow-up contacts with these consumers showed access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology.

#### **Item 4.6 - Self-Help and Self-Advocacy**

Briefly describe how the CIL has promoted self-help and self-advocacy among individuals with significant disabilities during the reporting period.

LIFE Board and Staff Members took part in support group/organizational meetings throughout the reporting year, providing helpful information where needed, including, but not limited to: People with Cerebral Palsy Facebook Group, Savannah Center for Blind and Low Vision Peer Support Groups, Georgia Council of the Blind, National Federation of the Blind, Ehlers-Danlos Society, Brain Injury Association of Georgia Savannah Chapter (LIFE's ED is the Treasurer of the BIAG state Board of Directors as well) and the Coastal Empire Polio Survivors Support Group.

LIFE has continued to provide its Students for LIFE (S4L) youth program to support transition age youth as well as increase awareness of the services offered through LIFE, Inc. As a result, the Students for LIFE Program provided 87 classes at 10 locations, including six schools, three Project SEARCH Sites, and a virtual Summer program hosted out of the LIFE office. This program allowed participants to gain self-efficacy skills and to understand their power in making independent choices to live productive lives. Additionally, The Power of YOU! youth transition conference took place, on 4/28/23, marking its return to in-person for the first time since before the pandemic.

LIFE staff liberated 12 individuals from nursing homes to the community-based living option of their choice using MFP and NHT programs. LIFE encouraged consumers & the general public to attend LIFE Board meetings that occur every other month. These meetings were posted on LIFE social media and published in LIFE's quarterly newsletters and held over Zoom for safety and for ease of access. LIFE's ED and other LIFE staff continued to support the growth and meeting of the group Coastal Alliance of CILs Active in Disaster. This group, founded by the CILs serving the coast of SC and LIFE which covers the coast of Georgia, took on the task of making PwD voices heard during the emergency planning process by bringing PwD lived experience with evacuations to the discussions, identifying holes in supports in emergency planning, and effectively disseminating information to PwD about emergency planning. This Fiscal Year, the group helped monitor the status of the storm and share information about support and recovery resources associated with Hurricane Idalia, which threatened the Georgia coastal areas at the end of August.

LIFE hosted IL Skills and Peer Support classes/meetings as described in Section 4.3, building up the community capacity of PwD in the area and providing a welcoming forum to share successes and brainstorm solutions. Another focus of self-advocacy efforts was around healthcare quality/access/equity. This was discussed several times in the peer support chats and became a formal

goal for at least one LIFE consumer. Additionally, LIFE's Board & Staff collectively spent 961.75 hours training by participating in 265 trainings. Though many of these overlapped across multiple categories, below are examples of categories chosen to highlight frequent or particularly noteworthy efforts, including a title for the subject matter covered, the number of trainings participated in, and an example of one such training.

Accessibility (10)

Digital Accessibility (5)--"Inclusive Imagery - Writing Alt-Text Depicting People with Disabilities"

Physical Accessibility (3)--"Accessing the Past: Accessibility in Historic Buildings and Facilities"

Benefits (11)

"WIC Ambassador training"

Board Development (1)

"Pro Bono Partnership Board training"

CIL Suite Trainings (5)

"Consumer I&R Intake Procedures"

Community Advocacy (2)

"UWCE Community Advocate training"

Disability History (4)

"History of Independent Living" Rapid Course

Disaster Planning (22)

International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) Conference in Savannah

Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (17)

ILRU "Disability Diversity and Intersectionality"

Employment (17)

"Building a Disability-Inclusive Organization" by Job Accommodation Network

Fundraising (4)

Gulfstream Learning Series, "Writing Outcomes Part 1: Learning Objectives"

Housing/Homelessness (33)

"Solving for Homelessness Among Older Adults, People with Disabilities, and Other Populations Through Cross-Sector Partnerships"

In-House Trainings (20)

"City of Savannah Discount Water Program"

IT/AT (18)

"Cybersecurity Fundamentals for Nonprofits"

Management/Professional Development (13)

"'Fine, I'll Do it Myself' and the Art of Delegation"

Mental Health/Self-care (8)

"Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace"

Outreach/Website (2)

"Social Media for Nonprofits: 12 Essential Tips for Success"

Protection Against Abuse (5)

"Survivors' Circle: A conversation with people with disabilities about sexual violence and how to address it"

Recreation (4)

"Creating Accessible Recreational Gaming."

Supports for/Rights of People with Sensory Disabilities (18)

"Learning from Civil Rights Lawsuits: Effective Communication with deaf, hard of hearing, blind and low vision incarcerated people."

Transportation (5)

"Ride On! An Introduction to Accessible Transportation"

Voting (9)

"Staying Nonpartisan for 501c3s"

Youth (8)

ILRU "Investing in the Independent Living Movement Means Investing in Youth,"

## Item 4.7 - Additional Information Concerning Individual Services or Achievements

Please provide any additional description or explanation concerning individual services or achievements reported in Section 4, including outstanding success stories and/or major obstacles encountered.

As noted throughout this Report, LIFE spent much of this fiscal year trying to reconnect with consumers driven further into isolation by the pandemic and unsure of the universe they would be encountering upon a return to in-person. The negligible decrease in consumers from the prior year (141 this year versus 144 last year) was despite LIFE staff attempts to engage the community through new program offerings (Living Well in the Community, the Community Engagement Retreat) and continued efforts to understand the community, how it had changed, and the new tools available to assist individuals encountering these changes (as indicated in the focus on mental health trainings and diversity, equity and inclusion trainings noted in Item 4.6). Despite the fall in the number of consumers served, the number of services provided rose from 1365 the prior year to 1464 this reporting period. This growth was directly attributable to a rise in the number of I&R services delivered, from 927 the prior year to 1053 this reporting year, as consumers sought information to better understand the reopening, the altered safety protocols including rules governing number and distribution riders on paratransit buses, hybrid service offerings, upcoming changes to benefits recertification rules, and the like, just as LIFE had anticipated. The increased intensity of select services for some consumers, masked by the data collection protocols of the 704/PPR, was more readily apparent in testimonials which demonstrated both the wrap-around nature of the services provided and the immense impact of specific services. Both varieties can be observed below.

LIFE received many statements of gratitude from its consumers. A few are listed below.

### General Thanks

"I'm doing great now, and I really appreciate the help."

-MH

### Nursing Home Testimonials

"I can always count on Mr. Clay [LIFE's Nursing Home Transition Coordinator]. If he says he's going to do something for you, he always follows through."

-Mr. Y (LIFE Consumer who transitioned out of a nursing home)

"I can't believe all that you were able to do for me. Clay [LIFE's Nursing Home Transition Coordinator] made everything smooth throughout the process."

-Consumer who transitioned out of a nursing home

### Peer Support Testimonials

"Most people don't bother to stop and listen to folks anymore, you have taken a load off my mind just by caring."

-CA

"I want to thank you so much for your peer support group. I have learned so much and have gotten to enjoy fellowship with others like me. Being able to share the emotions you go through in times of learning to deal with disabilities is so important. It's such a wonderful thing to know I have a place to be able to have support from people who understand."

-PV

### Employment/S4L Testimonial

A former Students for LIFE participant said that the program helped her gain valuable job skills. She has found and maintained employment, which she finds very fulfilling. "The most helpful thing was

getting my job." The former Students for LIFE attendee stated that she enjoys her job and is doing well there. She also said about S4L, "It helped me feel more confident." She had fun at the Power of YOU! Conference, and enjoyed speaking with the many vendors from support organizations.

#### Employment/Housing/Peer Support Testimonial

"I have been working with LIFE...for the past couple of months. LIFE has helped me get myself together in various ways. I have a weekly coordinator that calls me and checks up to make sure things are ok with me during these trying times. With me being on disability, it's very hard to make it happen out there in the world when a lot of people don't understand the struggles you go through, but LIFE was there for me. They understood my struggles and my ups and downs. LIFE helped me get housing, because I was homeless, and they also helped me create a resume for a job and gave me information that I needed to inform Social Security for the Ticket-To-Work program. I give them kudos for helping me so much--thank you Mr. Shannon [LIFE Peer Support Coordinator] and LIFE, Inc., I appreciate everything you have done, and I also appreciate everything that you are doing, now I can feel like I can be an independent person and make it on my own with help here and there. Thank you, LIFE!"

-LB

#### Home Mod/AT/DME Testimonials

"The ramp couldn't have came [sic] at a better time, Mom ended up having another surgery and without the ramp, she would not have been able to come [sic] home."

-ST

"I can't thank you enough for the wheelchair ramp! I really appreciate what you are doing and have done patiently with me."

-MJ

"This lift has made my life a lot easier for me to get around. I'm able to go to certain stores that I was not able to go to because I could not take my chair. Thank you for your help. God bless."

-WW

"I'm writing today to tell LIFE thank you so much for all the help and support you give. The hard work you do which allows people like me to get what we need to help us do what we need to do on our own. My latest items were a walk about walker with a sit. It has been so awesome having it. I now can go everywhere I need without worrying that I need to sit a minute and there is nowhere to sit. That has kept me from doing a lot of things before but now I'm up for the challenge. Thank you again for making my life a little easier."

#### -Consumer accessing DME through LIFE's partnership with FODAC

"Great speaking with you yesterday. Again, I would like to thank LIFE for providing me with the iPad. The device has alleviated some visual strain. I have been able to address emails, conduct job searches, and complete screeners for market research companies. It has also been great for grocery shopping. Overall, it's been working well for me."

#### -Consumer accessing services through LIFE's AT program



# SECTION 5 - PROVISION OF SERVICES

## **Item 5.1 - Compliance Indicator 2: Provision of Services on a Cross-Disability Basis**

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured that IL services are provided to eligible individuals with a diversity of significant disabilities and individuals who are members of populations that are unserved or underserved, without restrictions based on the particular type or types of significant disability and in a manner that is neither targeted nor limited to a particular type of significant disability.

LIFE's Core Services have consistently been made available to individuals and consumers who are members of populations that are unserved or underserved, without restrictions based on the particular type or types of significant disability and in a manner that is neither targeted nor limited to a particular type of significant disability.

LIFE services were offered and delivered in accessible locations, including LIFE's Savannah office which has automatic doors and appropriately positioned and graded ramps to ensure access, providing opportunities for cross-disability populations to participate. Individuals could also engage with LIFE via Zoom, allowing participation in school classrooms, at job worksites, and in individuals' respective homes.

LIFE staff could travel to LIFE's most rural areas including in-person site evaluation measuring for home modifications. LIFE staff utilized Zoom, Go To Meeting, or other virtual platforms to participate in info fairs, conduct presentations and meet with consumers in an effort to reach underserved populations, and LIFE staff member presence in community meetings, including Family Connections meetings, provided opportunities to get to know a diverse range of support organizations serving varied populations. Not only did this provide LIFE staff access to resources to pass along to consumers and other PwD, as described in Section 4.2 of this report, it also offered the opportunity to make LIFE services known to these partners so that they could refer their consumers to LIFE as appropriate, further expanding who LIFE can serve.

LIFE staff continued our Students for LIFE Program to work with our youth in the school systems with self-empowerment and independent living skills. As mentioned earlier, the Students for LIFE Program provided 87 classes at 10 locations, including six schools (Savannah High, Johnson High, Windsor Forest High, Islands High, Jenkins High, Chatham Academy) and three Project SEARCH Sites (PS Candler, PS Effingham, and PS Georgia Southern University-Armstrong Campus) and a virtual Summer Class hosted out of the LIFE office. This program allowed participants to gain self-efficacy skills and to understand their power in making independent choices to live productive lives.

Additionally, The Power of YOU! youth transition conference took place, on 4/28/23, marking the first time it returned to in-person since before the pandemic.

## **Item 5.2 - Alternative Formats**

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured the availability in alternative formats of all of its written policies and materials and IL services, as appropriate.

LIFE's Service Delivery Manual, By-Laws, Administrative/Personnel Policies, newsletters and brochures are available in large print, Braille, and electronic format upon request. Our board meeting minutes, as well as training materials, are available in alternate format. We are fortunate to have a Duxbury Brailier in-house and a staff member that has been trained on its use. We can also Braille material for other agencies when requests are received.

### **Item 5.3 - Equal Access**

(A) Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured equal access of individuals with significant disabilities, including communication and physical access, to the center's services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities, whether publicly or privately funded. Equal access, for the purposes of this indicator, means that the same access is provided to any individual with a significant disability regardless of the individual's type of significant disability.

LIFE provided physical and communication access to programs and services to a cross-disability population. Our office location which we moved into in September of 2019 is in a commercial shopping center, and the parking lot which we share with numerous other businesses, including DME providers offers ample parking dedicated for persons with disabilities. All entrances to the office are opened and closed by automatic doors which LIFE installed. LIFE built an ADA compliant ramp to the back entrance where staff members park to ensure physical accessibility and the front entrance is also accessible. An accessible restroom is available with raised print and Braille signage. LIFE only opened to drop ins the last month of the year and previously was by appointment only with doors locked to prevent walk-ins and ensure safety. During this time, LIFE staff communicated in-person procedures of calling in advance and rescheduling if the individual was symptomatic of illness, and any accommodations in procedure which were required could be pre-planned for and addressed in advance of arrival; the automatic doors were unlocked prior to the visitor's arrival to allow the access technology to serve its purpose. Once deciding to reopen to walk-ins, visiting individuals could use the automatic doors by pressing the appropriately located button outside the building. LIFE is accessible to people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. All activities that involve public attendance or participation sponsored by LIFE are ASL interpreted, if requested. LIFE's office also has blinking fire alarms. LIFE is accessible to people with visual disabilities. Volunteer readers are available when requested. Information provided by LIFE will also be Brailled when requested. LIFE has a Braille printer in house to expedite these requests. LIFE is accessible to persons with multiple chemical sensitivities. The office space has been designated as scent-free environment. LIFE strongly encourages consumers to arrange for their personal assistance. However, the organization recognizes that some consumers will be unable to provide for their personal care. Assistants may be provided when requested to persons attending LIFE sponsored events. LIFE hosts a NFB Newline Channel to post information concerning services and programs to the print disabled population. LIFE, where possible, offered hybrid options inclusive of Zoom coverage to allow access to individuals otherwise prevented from coming into the office.

(B) Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has advocated for and conducted activities that promote the equal access to all services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities in society, whether public or private, and regardless of funding source, for individuals with significant disabilities. Equal access, for the purposes of this indicator, means that the same access provided to individuals without disabilities is provided in the center's service area to individuals with significant disabilities.

LIFE's Board, staff, and consumers served on several disability advocacy committees throughout the

reporting year, including, but not limited to: Advisory Committee for Accessible Transportation (ACAT), Savannah-Chatham Council on Disability Issues (SCCDI), Southeast Center Directors' Association (SECDA), Brain Injury Association of Georgia (BIAG), National Federation of the Blind, the Coastal Empire Polio Survivors Association (CEPSA, Coastal Georgia Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC), Brunswick Area Transportation Survey (BATS) Citizen Advisory Council, the United Way of the Coastal Empire (UWCE) Agency Executive Leadership team and Family Connection Collaboratives in 6 counties. LIFE advocates for equal access to services, resources, and facilities in the community through individual and systems advocacy. The following activities represent some of these efforts:

One of LIFE's Board members serves as Vice President of Developmental Disabilities at EmployAbility where she works to integrate individuals with developmental disabilities into the community via competitive employment and community integration. One of LIFE's Board members has a PhD in Counseling, and is an Accredited Dementia Instructor began a new business in February as a certified senior advisor, where he connects seniors, many of whom have disabilities, with resources and supports them as they determine the best course of action for their present situation.. He also teaches classes for medical providers, first responders, and family members. One of LIFE's Board members taught a class on renters' education at the Southwest Library and at the Park Community Center where she mentioned the website GeorgiaHousingSearch.org. She also has been helping Georgia Wellness and received an award for 25 years of service with the UGA Extension. One of LIFE's Board members continued to make peer support phone calls for the polio support group. One of LIFE's Support Coordinator, a self-published author, educated the community by providing the Awesome Arlo children's book line. The books help raise awareness for children living with autism by teaching new concepts and decreasing stigmas associated with ASD. She also previously wrote "What Now: How to Survive a Loss Due to Suicide," describing her grief journey to help empower others to choose to live, choose to survive and the survivor to live in spite of it all. The book helps others recognize the signs of suicide ideation and raise awareness to help prevent suicide from happening all together. She also advocated heavily for the importance of get ahead of mental illness by addressing the concerns as early as possible. She additionally participated in the Out of Darkness Suicide Prevention Walk at Lake Mayer to help raise awareness. In her other job, she worked as a part-time service coordinator for Babies Can't Wait, where she provided education and support, resources and coordinated services to developmentally delayed babies from birth to 3 years old.

#### **Item 5.4 - Consumer Information**

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured that consumers have the opportunity to develop and achieve their goals (either with or without an ILP) and that the consumer has the opportunity to express satisfaction with the center and such consumer satisfaction results are evaluated by the center.

The IL coordinator and consumer work together to establish IL goals and objectives. The initial conversation begins with a discussion where the IL coordinator talks with the consumer about what they want and need, thereby establishing potential goals. After identifying what the consumer wishes to achieve, the LIFE staff member then helps the consumer develop steps (objectives) to allow for the consumer to accomplish these goals. At the conclusion of this planning session, the consumer holds an ILP, a step-by-step guide to accomplishing their goals. These goals and objectives are ideally written in the consumer's own words and are developed and monitored whether or not the consumer chooses to reduce his or her goals to writing in the form of an ILP or prefers to waive this option. Achievements of the consumer goals and objectives are recorded. Consumer records are secured to ensure that

confidentiality is guaranteed. Out of the 141 consumers served this reporting year, 100% made the decision to create an ILP.

LIFE consumers are given an opportunity to express their satisfaction/dissatisfaction via telephone inquiries which are conducted in a timely manner while the consumer's experience is still fresh in his or her mind. These phone calls were made to each consumer by a third party to make sure they were satisfied with the services provided. Nearly all of our consumers reported that they had become more independent as a result of the services provided. The LIFE staff member who conducts the satisfaction survey types up the results and leaves the hard copy report for the Office Manager to file in the consumer's CSR. During the reporting year, the Associate Director also served in the Office Manager role and reviewed the surveys prior to filing them and discusses any noteworthy feedback during the weekly administrative staff meeting, customarily held on Wednesdays. In this weekly meeting, the Associate Director, the Program Director and the Executive Director discuss planning matters, inclusive of service delivery strategies, and address how to implement new protocols where appropriate. In the reporting year that follows this report, the duties have been split with the hiring of someone specifically responsible for office management duties. This individual will review the paperwork with the Associate Director prior to filing it, and the above stated administrative sharing protocols will then commence. We have received many letters of gratitude and compliments on our service provision from our consumers throughout this reporting year. These letters are also included in the CSR's. The LIFE staff member facilitating the delivery of LIFE services informs the consumer of LIFE's grievance procedure when the consumer requests services. No grievances were filed against our organization during the reporting year. LIFE also offers an opportunity to provide feedback through our website ([www.lifecil.com](http://www.lifecil.com)).

### **Item 5.5 - Consumer Service Record Requirements**

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL ensured that each consumer's CSR contains all of the required information.

Documentation was signed and dated as described below.

The IL Coordinator maintained a Consumer Service Record (CSR) that included the following information:

1) On the left side of the file folder in the following order (from top to bottom):

a) Home-mod Checklist

b) Signed ILP

c) Signed CSR

d) LIFE and Consumer Service Commitment

e) Signed Release of information for LIFE Staff and funding sources

f) Signed Indemnity form (Waiver of liability)

g) Permission to build (if needed)

h) Any other documentation \* Copies of housing applications \* Birth Certificate \* Social Security card \*

Picture ID \* Verification of income, etc. i) Identification/Demographics (address)

2) On the right side of the file folder:

a) Contact logs

b) Letters

c) Other correspondence

The IL coordinator and consumer worked together to establish IL goals and objectives. These goals and objectives were developed and monitored whether or not an IL plan is created, though this year all consumers did so, and achievements of the consumer goals and objectives were recorded. Consumer

records were secured to ensure that confidentiality was guaranteed at all times

## Item 5.6 - Community Activities

### Community Activities Table

In the table below, summarize the community activities involving the CIL's staff and board members during the reporting period. For each activity, identify the primary disability issue(s) addressed as well as the type of activity conducted. Describe the primary objective(s) and outcome(s) for each activity. Add more rows as necessary.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcomes(s)
Promote Growth	Outreach Efforts	106	Present to organizations and the community as a whole about LIFE, its services, and the rights of PwD.	Prepare for and present on 16 occasions about a variety of topics to include: disability etiquette, LIFE's program and service offerings, assistive technology, ADA rights, advocacy, and accessible travel.
Increasing Other Access	Community Education & Public Information	448.25	Identify barriers to services for PwD and address through community partnerships/discussion (including ASL interpreter).	The identification of barriers involved LIFE presence at numerous community meetings, detailed below, but inclusive of preparation for and facilitation of Living Well in the Community, participation in Tuesdays with Tootle, and other such meetings.
Increasing Access to Communication	Community and Systems Advocacy	373	Help ensure development of systems to support PwD in a disaster/emergency	Attend 41 Coastal Alliance of CILs meetings & 44 Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies meetings, present at CEMA and SCEMA conferences, cofacilitate a training at Employability and present to the Southern Gerontological Society.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcomes(s)
Promote Growth	Collaborating and Networking	352.25	To expand available resources/opportunities for Pwd through community partnerships.	Participate in 69 meetings, including 15 meetings total spread across 6 Family Connections, 3 Coastal ADRC meetings, 2 NFB meets, 6 SILC/CIL ED Peer Support meetings, and 2 in-person SECDA meetings co-facilitated by LIFE's ED as VP.
Increasing Accessibility to Transportation	Community and Systems Advocacy	72.75	Attend community meetings/efforts re. transportation and lead/support efforts around the development of alternative transportation systems (i.e. van).	Attend 18 meetings including meets around on-demand service, provide 9 staff travel logs showing pick up/drop off times, provide accessibility review of CAT mobile app, join CAT Mobility Appeals Committee, host an IL Skills training provided by CAT.
Increasing Access to Other Legal Rights & Legislative Process	Community Education & Public Information	62.25	Attend meetings and organize/participate in efforts that work to ensure PwD have full access to the voting process.	Attend meetings, including 19 REV-UP GA meetings, participate in GCDD Advocacy Day at the Capitol, conduct a voter registration training, & host a debrief in person/over Zoom, on 11/8 to discuss voting experience across the state.
Increased Access to Education/Employment	Community Education & Public Information	162.5	Plan for and facilitate The Power of YOU! Youth Transition Fair in Savannah on April 28th to include support organizations as vendors and provide opportunities for young men and women to practice the soft skills they learned throughout the year.	Resumed in-person Transition Fair after two year hiatus due to Covid; efforts included securing presenter and location, coordinating with schools/sites to ensure transportation for participants, debriefing afterwards and begin planning next year's.

### Item 5.7 - Description of Community Activities

For the community activities mentioned above, provide additional details such as the role of the CIL staff board members and/or consumers, names of any partner organizations and further descriptions of the specific activities, services and benefits.

The first Community Activity listed above, identified by the tags "Promoting Growth" and "Outreach Activities," corresponded to the category internally labeled as "Presentations." LIFE used these

presentations to, among other things, inform groups about CILs and services offered by LIFE, describe rights of PwD, discuss AT, teach people about Braille, describe the challenges of evacuations during natural disasters from the perspective of PwDs, and/or provide disability etiquette trainings. Hosts included The Savannah Cultural Arts Center, Encompass Health, Coastal ADRC, Essential Tremors Group, Bright Eye-deas, Georgetown K-8, an area Kiwanis club, Work Source Coastal, Chatham Emergency Management (Hurricane Conference), Marshes at Glynn Library, TravelAbility Conference, and the SILC (presented to the Polish Delegation visiting).

The second Community Activity listed above, identified by the tags "Increasing Other Access" and "Community Education & Public Information," corresponded to the category internally labeled as "Barrier Identification and Removal." This category captured community efforts to find access issues and determine ways to overcome them. This included planning around the Wren Consulting event detailed elsewhere in this Report; planning for Living Well in the Community; overcoming physical and communication barriers that arose in the planning for TravelAbility; planning for Neurodiversity Is Beautiful; planning for and performing In-person or digital Site Evaluations including for Fort Pulaski, Savannah Cultural Arts Center, the Experian CCR App, UGA Marine Extension; attending NFB Convention Series Webinars; supporting the early stages of DME provider FODAC's move into a location in Savannah; and meeting with Xcel Mentoring about building a volunteer contracting group. The Living Well in the Community Program involved significant staff training and participant recruitment. It was comprised of the following 10 lessons: 1) Orientation/Goal Setting; 2) Building Support; 3) Healthy Reactions; 4) Staying the Course; 5) Healthy Reactions; 6) Seeking Information; 7) Healthy Eating; 8) Physical Activity; 9) Advocacy; 10) Maintenance.

The third Community Activity listed above, identified by the tags "Increasing Access to Communication" and "Community and Systems Advocacy," corresponded to the category internally labeled as "Emergency Planning Efforts." This primarily encompassed participation in The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies National Stakeholder meetings and Coastal Alliance of CILs Active In Disaster meetings. The Coastal Alliance of CILs has been the cornerstone of LIFE's efforts to ensure PwD living in the area have their voice heard, and the group's continued formalization of its outputs, including the brochures it now provides to emergency planners at various conferences as well as the more professional website allows the group to project messages formed by LIFE in conjunction with the SC CILs and other community partners attending group meetings. Other examples of activities included real time information gathering and dispersal during Hurricane Idalia as it approached LIFE's service area, participation in the Georgia Emergency Coalition, and participation in trainings to include a FEMA Extreme Weather Webinar and a FEMA National Resilience Listening Session.

The fourth Community Activity listed above, identified by the tags "Promote Growth" and "Collaborating and Networking," corresponded to the category internally labeled as "Meetings/Partnerships--Community." This category sought to capture meetings centered around community relationship building, such as five county Family Connections groups (Bryan, Bulloch, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn), six SILC/CIL ED peer support meetings, Lion's Club meetings, Coastal ADRC meetings, UWCE Agency Executive Council meetings, and planning for and assisting in the facilitation of 2 in person Southeast Center Director Association (SECDA) meetings.

The fifth Community Activity listed above, identified by the tags "Increasing Accessibility to Transportation" and "Community and Systems Advocacy," corresponded to the category internally labeled as "Transportation." It included the efforts noted above but also successful advocacy to secure CAT pick up for Project Search class members whose previously could not get a bus assigned to them and advocacy with the City of Savannah around a malfunctioning talking crosswalk signal,

The sixth Community Activity listed above, identified by the tags "Increasing Access to Other Legal Rights & Legislative Process" and "Community Education & Public Information," corresponded to the category internally labeled as "Voting." As noted below in Item 6.1.3, LIFE made a concerted effort in its Work Plan to educate both LIFE staff and LIFE consumers about voter rights for PwD. The above description captures much of what was done. Participation in REV-UP GA, a non-partisan voter rights group, helped LIFE stay abreast of changes to voting laws that could impact PwD, which they then subsequently shared with their consumers. Occasionally, a more casual discussion during Tuesdays with Tootle turned to voting issues, too, providing yet another forum for people to discuss their

experiences and their concerns.

The seventh Community Activity listed above, identified by the tags "Increased Access to Education/Employment" and "Community Education & Public Information," corresponded to the category internally labeled as "The Power of YOU!" This included the development of relationships that supported the return to an in-person event, negotiations to secure the space, identification and securing of the speaker. The event was a huge success. It was attended by 51 students from 8 schools/host locations including New Hamstead, Islands, Project Search Candler & Armstrong, South Effingham High, Effingham High, Liberty County Transition Academy, Groves. Using UWCE funding, LIFE was able to provide lunch for all attendees which included teachers, parents, vendors (10 orgs), and a professional motivational speaker and magician, Cody Clark. Cody is an individual with a disability who owns his own business, and he not only entertained but also provided strategies around overcoming obstacles and encouraged attendees to pursue their goals.



# SECTION 6 - ANNUAL PROGRAM AND FINANCIAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES

## 6.1 - Work Plan for the Reporting Period

### Item 6.1.1 - Achievements

Discuss the work plan's proposed goals and objectives and the progress made in achieving them during the reporting period.

LIFE accomplished its work plan in almost its entirety. The exceptions are noted below in "Item 6.1.2 Challenges" section, as well as the reason behind its misses. Item 6.1.1 reflects only those Work Plan items that were completed. The parenthetical notation at the end of next to each Work Plan item (each of which is labeled "WP" to avoid confusion with substantive headings) is labeled with a Goal/Subsection/Sub-subsection heading referencing the specific objective from the Strategic Plan that it attempts to further (to demonstrate how closely the Work Plan adheres to its governing document, the Strategic Plan). Though the volume of text needed to demonstrate precisely how each of these items was accomplished exceeds the space here provided, examples can be found in the Community Activities description in Item 4.7 of this Report, and LIFE staff has confirmed and documented what was done in furtherance of each Work Plan item below.

Mission: To promote independent living and advance community change for EVERYONE.

GOAL 1: To advocate for equal access to services, programs, activities, resources and facilities.

A: Transportation--To identify consumers' unmet need with respect to transportation services in our service area and during crisis (ex. hurricane evacuation) and work to develop resources to address said need

-WP: LIFE staff members will either attend or host at minimum a total of 10 meetings to discuss available accessible transportation options or development of new options. (G1, A., I.)

-WP: LIFE Staff members will collect at least 25 surveys a year from our consumers about their experiences during natural disasters. (G1, A., III.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will attend at least 6 CAT hosted meetings a year and present consumer feedback during two of them. (G1, A., IV.)

-WP: LIFE will host at least one Peer Support or IL Skills event a year to solicit information from Chatham residents about their experiences with CAT Mobility. (G1, A., IV.)

B:Services--To identify barriers to access of services for our consumers and others with disabilities in our service area and work to remove or determine ways to circumvent these barriers

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will attend, at minimum, 6 community meetings promoting access to services besides transportation services each year. (G1, B., I.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will attend, at minimum, 5 trainings about how to make services more accessible for PwD. (G1, B., I.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will identify local, state, and national efforts around increasing

coverage of mental health support services on insurance formularies and present the findings to local residents during an IL Skills event. (G1, B., III.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will identify at least one community organization a year to educate on ADA requirements, work with them on compliance and highlight the collaboration in LIFE electronic media and/or newsletter. (G1, B., IV.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will identify at least one new contractor in its service area per year. (G1, B., V.)

-WP: LIFE Staff members will support the formation of volunteer contractor groups by pitching the need during at least 10 community meetings per year and introducing any interested parties to existing volunteer groups. (G1, B., V.)

-WP: LIFE will offer incentives and supports to PwD to allow access to Covid vaccines, including the hosting of at least 1 vaccine clinic to allow PwD to gain access to Covid vaccines. (G1, B., VIII.)

C: Resources--To identify existing community resources that support consumers and others with disabilities in our service area and promote access to these resources

-WP: LIFE Staff members will meet and/or correspond with at least 10 people who are members of the public sector in Georgia, including but not limited to GVRA, DCA, DPH, Emergency Management Agencies, and school teachers and administrators. (G1, C., I.)

-WP: LIFE staff will identify and meet with at least one funding organization who funds services that benefit or advocacy that impacts PwD in each of LIFE's 20 counties. (G1, C., II.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will annually identify and explore 1 new fee for service opportunity. (G1, C., III.)

-WP: LIFE Staff will develop one new source of funding per year. (G1, C., IV.)

D: Legislative--To advance community change by facilitating access by consumers to the legislative process

-WP: We will update LIFE's website once a year after elections to ensure all elected representatives from the service area are correct and their information is provided or webpage is linked. (G1, D., I.)

-WP: We will engage with (virtually, telephonically or in person) with at least two elected representatives a year. (G1, D., II.)

E: Legal--To enhance community capacity through efforts to enforce existing rights of PwD and promote access to legal resources for individuals living with disabilities in our service area

-WP: We will host at least one IL Skills event around the importance of voting and how to do so. (G1, E., I.)

-WP: We will attend at least 10 community meetings that include discussions around access to voting. (G1, E., II.)

-WP: We will publicize voter protection resources on LIFE's digital media platforms and make PwD aware of them both in the trainings and individual meetings in case issues arise. (G1, E., III.)

Goal 2: To promote personal, organizational, and community growth through educating, training, and sharing personal experiences.

A. Educating--To educate consumers, staff, and the greater community about the rights of individuals with disabilities

-WP: We will host speakers at IL Skills events and staff meetings who cover at least 4 of the following subjects: Fair Housing, Nursing Home Transition, SSI/SSDI, Employment, Access to Courts and/or Engagement with Law Enforcement; then record and upload at least 2 of them. (G2, A., I.)

-WP: We will offer disability etiquette training to at least 3 organizations/agencies in the community each year and collaborate with them to provide the training when offer is accepted. (G2, A., II.)

-WP: We will offer at least one IL Skills training session around disability etiquette. (G2, A., III.)

-WP: We will promote at least two community employment efforts targeting PwD on LIFE's digital media platforms. (G2, A., IV.)

-WP: We will reach out to at least 5 Secondary or Post-Secondary Educational organizations to make them aware of LIFE's services, including the S4L program. (G2, A., V.)

-WP: We will put on at least 2 staff trainings about the process, pitfalls, and available supports involved in nursing home transition efforts. (G2, A., VI.)

-WP: We will bring in at least one speaker for a staff training to discuss coverages offered under Medicare, Medicaid, Medicare Advantage Plans, and/or local private offerings through the exchange. (G2, A., VII.)

B. Training--To provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and other area residents to receive training that supports independent living in the community

-WP: We will conduct at least 12 peer support and IL Skills classes each year with at least two being in person, one of which to be held in expansion counties. (G2, B., I.)

-WP: We will offer at least one IL Skills class and one staff training on ADA employment protections for PwD and/or employment incentives for hiring PwD. (G2, B., II.)

-WP: We will identify at least one group/organization that advocates for or facilitates recreational opportunities for PwD and contact them to see how we can help to support or grow efforts. (G2, B., III.)

C. Sharing--To facilitate the sharing of information regarding resources, upcoming events, and consumer successes with residents of our service area

-WP: We will host or support third party efforts to hold an event that supports the hiring of PwD. (G2, C., I.)

-WP: We will host at least 6 social club events where PwD and community peers can get together to play games or engage in other fun activities. (G2, C., II.)

-WP: We will provide, on LIFE's Facebook page, links to at least 5 relevant community partners supporting PwD. (G2, C., III.)

-WP: We will feature at least one business who requested a site evaluation in our newsletter each year. (G2, C., IV.)

-WP: We will publish at least 6 success stories on one of the LIFE controlled platforms, to include LIFE's Facebook page, LIFE's newsletter, LIFE's website and LIFE's YouTube channel. (G2, C., V.)

-WP: We will publish on LIFE's website LIFE's service numbers pulled from the PPR once approved by ACL. (G2, C., VI.)

-WP: We will feature at least one story per newsletter about rural county services/events LIFE participated in or wishes to promote. (G2, C., VII.)

Goal 3: To offer individual and community-based services and programs to enhance independent living.

A. Individual Services--To efficiently and effectively deliver LIFE services to individual consumers to promote independent living and empower consumers to meet their own needs.

-WP: We will offer the S4L program in at least 5 different settings. (G3, A., I.)

-WP: We will host at least 6 IL skills classes. (G3, A., II.)

-WP: We will deploy at least 3 modular ramps in our service area. (G3, A., III.)

-WP: We will publicize our ability to offer alternative formats on LIFE media as well as directly offering the program to at least 3 community partners. (G3, A., IV.)

-WP: We will host at least one Peer Support event in the community. (G3, A., V.)

-WP: We will identify all instances where LIFE paperwork is not fully accessible and begin to address the issues. (G3, A., VI.)

B. Community Based Services (networking; partnerships; 3rd Party directed)--To deliver community-based services to consumers in our service area.

-WP: We will offer at least 6 IL Skills classes. (G3, B., I.)

-WP: We will identify 6 potential recreational areas of interest to LIFE consumers. (G3, B., II.)

-WP: We will collaborate with CAT and/or potential vehicle donors to develop an on-demand transit option. (G3, B., III.)

-WP: We will participate in at least 5 meetings focused on addressing homelessness. (G3, B., IV.)

C. Programs--To develop/maintain/strengthen programs designed to deliver community-based services to consumers throughout LIFE's expanded service area.

-WP: We will offer disability etiquette training to at least 5 organizations/agencies. (G3, C., I.)

-WP: We will provide consumers at least 15 pieces of refurbished durable medical equipment. (G3, C., II.)

-WP: We will offer LIFE's alternative formats to at least 5 community partners. (G3, C., III.)

-WP: We will offer to conduct accessibility surveys of physical and digital space for 5 organizations/institutions in the community. (G3, C., IV.)

-WP: We will support engage in outreach around the development of at least 1 volunteer group in our service area. (G3, C., V., b. AND G3, C., V., c.)

-WP: We will work with existing home mod volunteer groups to develop a template for implementing a volunteer home mod group. (G3, C., VI.)

-WP: We will offer to 3 organizations or provide to 1 organization LIFE's Alternative Format Program (AFP) as a fee for service offering. (G3, C., VIII., a.)

-WP: We will offer 5 trainings to some combination of staff and consumers on available AT offerings and record at least one. (G3, C., VIII., b.)

-WP: We will identify and collaborate with at least 5 organizations providing mental health related supports, 2 of which must cover expansion county residents. (G3, C., X.)

## **Item 6.1.2 - Challenges**

Describe any substantial challenges or problems encountered by the CIL, and the resolutions/attempted resolutions.

Mission: To promote independent living and advance community change for EVERYONE.

GOAL 1: To advocate for equal access to services, programs, activities, resources and facilities.

A: Transportation--To identify consumers' unmet need with respect to transportation services in our service area and during crisis (ex. hurricane evacuation) and work to develop resources to address said need

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will work to identify funding to operate a transportation network for PwD and pursue potential vehicle donations that arise. (G1, A., II.)

Why Didn't Achieve: The prospective accessible van donation in the prior year fell through at the last moment after LIFE staff had designed a program to be staffed through PHWF funding. Hopes of another gift materializing quickly receded as the year progressed, and LIFE instead focused on guiding much better funded municipal efforts through its participation in the CAT Smart community stakeholder committee and Chatham Connects meetings.

B:Services--To identify barriers to access of services for our consumers and others with disabilities in our service area and work to remove or determine ways to circumvent these barriers

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will identify and begin collaborative efforts with at least 5 organizations working to develop a Medicaid Waiver for individuals with mental health related disabilities. (G1, B., II.)

Why Didn't Achieve: LIFE staff frequently engaged in community efforts to enhance supports for people with mental health related disabilities (see Item 5.7 entries for Barrier Identification and Removal), as well as trainings to better understand needs and existing supports (see Item 4.6 for training information). Despite LIFE staff's most earnest efforts, they could not identify substantive local efforts

around development of such a waiver. One explanation offered was that Medicaid Waivers arose out of the Olmstead obligation to balance out institutional spending with spending on community-based offerings. Post de-institutionalization efforts, the government no longer funded long term institutional mental health facilities and therefore did not need to balance its Medicaid expenditures there with a targeted Waiver. Though some practitioners repeated the explanation, LIFE staff never formally confirmed this reasoning, thought the inability to identify any efforts lent some credence to it. Regardless, no efforts could be found, and this was removed from the Work Plan that followed, and the Strategic Plan itself was amended to remove the objective this Work Plan item hoped to further.

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will reach out quarterly to local ASL interpreters and agencies to confirm consistent usage and continued availability. (G1, B., VI.)

Why Didn't Achieve: LIFE staff worked frequently with an ASL interpreting service provider to provide ASL interpreting services for itself and its partners (see, for example, the PHWF section of this report). In furthering these goals, LIFE was in contact with ASL providers in every quarter besides the 3rd quarter of the reporting year. This omission prevented completion of this Work Plan item, though LIFE's other efforts furthered the spirit of what was desired here.

-WP: LIFE Board members will each annually identify at least one person who could join the Board and inform their fellow Board members of the candidate. (G1, B., VII.)

Why Didn't Achieve: The Board grew considerably this reporting year, reaching a total of 12 members. Most of the Board members offered people they thought would be good, but not all did. As 12 represents the largest Board of LIFE's ED's tenure of 7+ years, the Board recruitment effort was successful and secured sufficient numbers to maintain the necessary 7 members needed per LIFE's by-laws even if some Members have to step away suddenly. Thus, like the Work Plan item above, the spirit of the item was achieved, though the effort fell short of the identified objective.

Goal 3: To offer individual and community-based services and programs to enhance independent living. C. Programs--To develop/maintain/strengthen programs designed to deliver community-based services to consumers throughout LIFE's expanded service area.

-WP: We will apply for 3 grants to fund home modifications in our area. (G3, C., V., a.)

Why Didn't Achieve: LIFE allocated an unexpected increase in state funding into the home modification program, and when coupled with the \$10,000 in SILC/CareSource funding, LIFE staff pursued other objectives rather than writing for additional grant funding for the home modification program.

-WP: We will deploy at least one session from the Students for LIFE in an expansion county setting. (G3, C., VI.)

Why Didn't Achieve: Despite repeated documented attempts to get into the expansion schools, focusing on Wayne County due to its proximity to the potential instructors and LIFE's expansion office, LIFE was unable to gain access to the population, as administration proved reluctant to allow LIFE into the schools. Unfortunately, the schools contacted weren't interested in partnering on this.

-WP: We will identify at least three potential board members with a mental health support background or disability. (G3, C., IX.)

Why Didn't Achieve: As the Board grew organically, it left less room for targeted efforts like this. That said, two members joined who would fall into these categories, a greater accomplishment than simply identifying three potential members. Again, the goal of this Item was achieved but the articulated outcome sought was not.

### **Item 6.1.3 - Comparison with Prior Reporting Period**

As appropriate, compare the CIL's activities in the reporting period with its activities in prior periods, e.g., recent trends.

After concluding a bridge 1-year Strategic Plan the prior year, this year's Strategic Plan and thus its corresponding Work Plan took on bigger challenges. As noted in Item 7.1.1, the reticence to engage remained even as the pandemic receded, and LIFE's slight dip in consumers served reflected this. As it remained uncertain how isolation had altered social norms and people's way of conducting themselves, LIFE spent much of the year gathering information, training on new tools and trying new forms of outreach, including projecting into other spaces. In the late Fall, LIFE was first approached by a DBHDD contractor about gathering information from Coastal Georgia residents with developmental disabilities about their experiences during emergency events, inclusive of natural disasters and more localized or manmade interruptions. Working with the Georgia Advocacy Office, LIFE tapped into its Board connections with EmployAbility to use their space to host the event in Savannah in December, providing important information for disaster planning efforts. Later, Wren Consulting reached out to LIFE about hosting an event to improve the community for individuals, then collaborated with LIFE staff to hold a Community Engagement Retreat at the LIFE office on May 9th. LIFE invited community members (including local Project Search classes they previously worked with through Students for LIFE), nonprofits, and civic organizations. The goal of the four-hour event was to teach about Asset-based Community Development, Collective Impact and Theory U - three powerful tools for making change. Participants experienced the techniques and also learned how to use these tools in their own work and lives. The workshop included practical tools for identifying the gifts, talents and skills in your community and how to work across differences to make change for people with intellectual/developmental disabilities. This conversation identified issues participants cared about most as well as how to work across differences from a place of collaboration rather than competition and help stimulate new ideas, projects and strengthen relationships. This session confirmed the desire for community, recreational events, and inspired a later Tybee Beach Cleanup with the Summer for LIFE class. The Living Well In the Community program, detailed elsewhere in this Report, also represented yet another unique offering at LIFE, and set the stage for the NiCIP planning activities in the year to follow.

In light of the increased return to in-person activity in the community, this year's Work Plan incorporated the more robust transportation demands found in the corresponding Work Plan, including 6 Work Plan items which were all accomplished to fulfill the 5 Strategic Plan initiatives around Transportation in Goal 1 (up from 2 the prior year). The prior ease with which ASL interpreters could be accessed in the digital world evaporated with the return to in-person programming, so LIFE's new Work Plan included outreach around ASL whereas its predecessor did not. This became especially important when it supported the TravelAbility Conference that came to Savannah, an effort detailed in the PHWF narrative. As the political rancor ratcheted up and Georgia politicians leaned into voting restrictions born of unsupported election security concerns, LIFE prioritized supports for PwD's right to vote, increasing the activity around this endeavor, as shown in Item 5.6 and 5.7 of this report, and codifying it in the Work Plan in Goal 1 in Subsection E. Legal of the Work Plan.

With the expiration of the CARES funding, the Work Plan removed Covid-related support goals found in the prior year's Work Plan, and the focus returned to planning-related efforts as opposed to payment for 3rd party-provided goods.

## **6.2 - Work Plan for the Period Following the Reporting Period**

### **Item 6.2.1 - Annual Work Plan**

List the CIL's annual work plan goals, objectives and action steps planned for the period following the reporting period.

Mission: To promote independent living and advance community change for EVERYONE.

Goal 1: To advocate for equal access to services, programs, activities, resources and facilities.

A: Transportation--To identify consumers' unmet need with respect to transportation services in our service area and during crisis (ex. hurricane evacuation) and work to develop resources to address said need.

-WP: LIFE staff members will either attend or host at minimum a total of 10 meetings to discuss available accessible transportation options or development of new options. (G1, A., I.)

-WP: We will seek information about two other transportation systems in similarly sized/situated counties in the SE in order to borrow ideas to apply to challenges. (G1, A., II.)

-WP: LIFE Staff members will collect at least 10 surveys from our consumers about their experiences during natural disasters. (G1, A., III.)

-WP: LIFE staff will share personal and consumer experience information with CAT, such as requested time vs. pick up time, timing of arrival at destination and courtesy of the drivers.

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will attend at least 6 CAT hosted meetings a year and present consumer feedback during two of them. (G1, A., IV.)

-WP: LIFE will host at least one Peer Support or IL Skills event a year to share information about CAT Mobility and on-demand offerings. (G1, A., IV.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will attend scheduled CAT Microtransit pop-up events as they arise. (G1, A., IV.)

-WP: At least twice a year, LIFE staff members will offer to provide disability etiquette classes to CAT. (G1, A., V.)

B: Services--To identify barriers to access of services for our consumers and others with disabilities in our service area and work to remove or determine ways to circumvent these barriers

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will attend, at minimum, 6 community meetings promoting access to services besides transportation services each year including 2 outside of Chatham County. (G1, B., I.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will present to, at minimum, 3 organizations about how to make services more accessible for PwD. (G1, B., I.)

-WP: LIFE will hold at least 2 staff trainings what both public and private health insurance providers offer and what should factor into choice of plans. (G1, B., II.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will identify at least one community organization a year to educate on ADA requirements, work with them on compliance and highlight the collaboration in LIFE electronic media and/or newsletter. (G1, B., III.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will identify at least one new contractor in its service area per year. (G1, B., IV.)

-WP: LIFE Staff members will support the formation of volunteer contractor groups by pitching the need during at least 10 community meetings per year and introducing any interested parties to existing volunteer groups. (G1, B., IV.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will reach out quarterly to local ASL interpreters and agencies to confirm consistent usage and continued availability. (G1, B., V.)

-WP: LIFE's Board will create Board Subcommittees and LIFE's Board and Staff will invite and involve outside community members in planning efforts through these Subcommittees. (G1, B., VI.)

-WP: LIFE staff will participate in community meetings focused keeping people safe from disease spread and will disseminate vetted information to consumers and other PwD about vaccine availability. (G1, B., VI.)

C: Resources--To identify existing community resources that support consumers and others with disabilities in our service area and promote access to these resources

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will meet and/or correspond with at least 10 people who are members of the public sector in Georgia, including but not limited to GVRA, DCA, DPH, Emergency Management Agencies, and schoolteachers and administrators. (G1, C., I.)

-WP: LIFE will partner with relevant community organizations to put on at least one outreach/fundraising event. (G1, C., II.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will annually identify and explore 1 new fee for service opportunity. (G1, C., III.)

-WP: LIFE Staff will develop one new source of funding per year. (G1, C., IV.)

D: Legislative--To advance community change by facilitating access by consumers to the legislative process

-WP: LIFE staff will update LIFE's website once a year after elections to ensure all elected representatives from the service area are correct and their information is provided or webpage is linked. (G1, D., I.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will engage with (virtually, telephonically or in person) with at least two elected representatives a year. (G1, D., II.)

E: Legal--To enhance community capacity through efforts to enforce existing rights of PwD and promote access to legal resources for individuals living with disabilities in our service area

-WP: LIFE will host at least one IL Skills event around the importance of voting and how to do so. (G1, E., I.)

-WP: LIFE staff will attend at least 10 community meetings that include discussions around access to voting. (G1, E., II.)

-WP: LIFE staff will publicize voter protection resources on LIFE's digital media platforms and make PwD aware of them both in the trainings and individual meetings in case issues arise. (G1, E., III.)

Goal 2: To promote personal, organizational, and community growth through educating, training, and sharing personal experiences.

A. Educating--To educate consumers, staff, and the greater community about the rights of individuals with disabilities

-WP: LIFE will host speakers at IL Skills events and staff meetings who cover at least 4 of the following subjects: Fair Housing, Nursing Home Transition, SSI/SSDI, Employment, Access to Courts, Alternative Access to Print Materials, and/or Engagement with Law Enforcement; then record and upload at least 2 of them. (G2, A., I.)

-WP: LIFE staff will offer disability etiquette training to at least 3 organizations/agencies in the community each year and collaborate with them to provide the training when offer is accepted. (G2, A., II.)

-WP: LIFE staff will offer at least one IL Skills training session around disability etiquette. (G2, A., III.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will promote at least two community employment efforts targeting PwD on LIFE's digital media platforms. (G2, A., IV.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff will reach out to at least 5 Secondary or Post-Secondary Educational organizations to make them aware of LIFE's services, including the S4L program. (G2, A., V.)

-WP: LIFE staff will put on at least 2 staff trainings about the process, pitfalls, and available supports involved in nursing home transition efforts. (G2, A., VI.)

B. Training--To provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and other area residents to receive training that supports independent living in the community



-WP: LIFE staff will conduct at least a total of 12 peer support and IL Skills classes each year with at least two being in person, one of which to be held in expansion counties. (G2, B., I.)

-WP: LIFE staff will offer at least one IL Skills class and one staff training on ADA employment protections for PwD and/or employment incentives for hiring PwD. (G2, B., II.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will identify at least one group/organization that advocates for or facilitates recreational opportunities for PwD and contact them to see how we can help to support or grow efforts. (G2, B., III.)

C. Sharing--To facilitate the sharing of information regarding resources, upcoming events, and consumer successes with residents of our service area

-WP: LIFE staff will host or support third party efforts to hold an event that supports the hiring of PwD. (G2, C., I.)

-WP: LIFE Staff will host at least 6 social club events where PwD and community peers can get together to play games or engage in other fun activities. (G2, C., II.)

-WP: LIFE staff will provide, on LIFE's Facebook page, links to at least 5 relevant community partners supporting PwD. (G2, C., III.)

-WP: LIFE staff will create a space on LIFE's website to show relevant upcoming events from community partners. (G2, C., III.)

-WP: LIFE staff will creating an "Elections" tab on LIFE's website to provide information about voting with a focus on the rights of PwD (G2, C., III)

-WP: LIFE staff will feature at least one business who requested a site evaluation in LIFE's newsletter each year. (G2, C., IV.)

-WP: We will publish at least 6 success stories on one of the LIFE controlled platforms, to include LIFE's Facebook page, LIFE's newsletter, LIFE's website and LIFE's YouTube channel. (G2, C., V.)

-WP: LIFE staff will create a "Successes" tab on LIFE's website to showcase individual consumer success stories and LIFE's impact on the community. (G2, C., V.)

-WP: LIFE staff will publish on LIFE's website LIFE's service numbers pulled from the PPR once approved by ACL. (G2, C., VI.)

-WP: LIFE staff will feature at least one story per newsletter about rural county services/events LIFE participated in or wishes to promote. (G2, C., VII.)

-WP: LIFE staff will ensure that the "Resources" tab on the website specifies resources available for all of its counties. (G2, C., VII.)

Goal 3: To offer individual and community-based services and programs to enhance independent living.

A. Individual Services--To efficiently and effectively deliver LIFE services to individual consumers to promote independent living and empower consumers to meet their own needs.

-WP: With instructor permission, LIFE staff will provide in-person instruction to participating S4L classes at least three times. (G3, A., I.)

-WP: LIFE staff will host at least 6 IL skills classes. (G3, A., II.)

-WP: LIFE staff will deploy at least 3 modular ramps in our service area. (G3, A., III.)

-WP: LIFE staff will publicize LIFE's ability to offer alternative formats on LIFE media as well as directly offering the program to at least 3 community partners. (G3, A., IV.)

-WP: LIFE staff will host at least one Peer Support event in the community. (G3, A., V.)

-WP: LIFE staff will create a list of accessibility issues with the LIFE Paperwork and identify steps to address the issues. (G3, A., VI.)

B. Community Based Services (networking; partnerships; 3rd Party directed)--To deliver community-based services to consumers in our service area.

-WP: LIFE staff will offer at least 6 IL Skills classes. (G3, B., I.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will meet with two organizations to discuss collaboration around a recreational program. (G3, B., II.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will attend at minimum 5 community meetings about improvement to service

county transportation systems. (G3, B. III.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will participate in at least 5 meetings addressing homelessness and ensure that PwD needs are addressed. (G3, B., IV.)

C. Programs--To develop/maintain/strengthen programs designed to deliver community-based services to consumers throughout LIFE's expanded service area.

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will offer disability etiquette training to at least 5 organizations/agencies. (G3, C., I.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will partner with FODAC and GVRA to increase the availability of DME for PwD by participating in community meetings with both organizations and learning how to integrate consumers into the new referral process. (G3, C., II.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will offer LIFE's alternative formats to at least 5 community partners. (G3, C., III.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will offer to conduct accessibility surveys of physical and digital space for 5 organizations/institutions in the community. (G3, C., IV.)

-WP: LIFE Staff will apply for 3 grants to fund home modifications in our area. (G3, C., V., a.)

-WP: LIFE staff will engage in outreach around the development of at least 1 home mod volunteer group in our service area. (G3, C., V., b.) & (G3, C., V., c.)

-WP: LIFE staff will deploy at least one session from the Students for LIFE in an expansion county setting. (G3, C., VI.)

-WP: LIFE staff will offer to 3 organizations or provide to 1 organization LIFE's AFP as a fee for service offering. (G3, C., VIII., a.)

-WP: LIFE staff will offer 5 trainings to some combination of staff and consumers on available AT offerings and record at least one. (G3, C., VIII., b.)

-WP: LIFE Board will identify one mental health initiative for LIFE to pursue. (G3, C., VIII.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will identify and collaborate with at least 5 organizations providing mental health related supports, 2 of which must cover expansion county residents. (G3, C., IX.)

## **Item 6.2.2 - SPIL Consistency**

Explain how these work plan goals, objectives and action steps are consistent with the approved SPIL.

What follows is the Georgia SPIL, recently extended for one year, and how LIFE's Work Plan, in force for the following reporting year aligns with these goals.

SPIL GOAL 1: Georgians with disabilities are prepared in emergency situation

LIFE

Goal 1: To advocate for equal access to services, programs, activities, resources and facilities.

A: Transportation--To identify consumers' unmet need with respect to transportation services in our service area and during crisis (ex. hurricane evacuation) and work to develop resources to address said need.

-WP: LIFE Staff members will collect at least 10 surveys from our consumers about their experiences during natural disasters. (G1, A., III.)

C: Resources--To identify existing community resources that support consumers and others with disabilities in our service area and promote access to these resources

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will meet and/or correspond with at least 10 people who are members of the public sector in Georgia, including but not limited to GVRA, DCA, DPH, Emergency

Management Agencies, and schoolteachers and administrators. (G1, C., I.)

SPIL GOAL 2: Georgians with disabilities will have adequate access to transit  
LIFE

Goal 1: To advocate for equal access to services, programs, activities, resources and facilities.

A: Transportation--To identify consumers' unmet need with respect to transportation services in our service area and during crisis (ex. hurricane evacuation) and work to develop resources to address said need.

-WP: LIFE staff members will either attend or host at minimum a total of 10 meetings to discuss available accessible transportation options or development of new options. (G1, A., I.)

-WP: We will seek information about two other transportation systems in similarly sized/situated counties in the SE in order to borrow ideas to apply to challenges. (G1, A., II.)

-WP: LIFE Staff members will collect at least 10 surveys from our consumers about their experiences during natural disasters. (G1, A., III.)

-WP: LIFE staff will share personal and consumer experience information with CAT, such as requested time vs. pick up time, timing of arrival at destination and courtesy of the drivers.

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will attend at least 6 CAT hosted meetings a year and present consumer feedback during two of them. (G1, A., IV.)

-WP: LIFE will host at least one Peer Support or IL Skills event a year to share information about CAT Mobility and on-demand offerings. (G1, A., IV.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will attend scheduled CAT Microtransit pop-up events as they arise. (G1, A., IV.)

-WP: At least twice a year, LIFE staff members will offer to provide disability etiquette classes to CAT. (G1, A., V.)

Goal 3: To offer individual and community-based services and programs to enhance independent living.  
B. Community Based Services (networking; partnerships; 3rd Party directed)--To deliver community-based services to consumers in our service area.

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will attend at minimum 5 community meetings about improvement to service county transportation systems. (G3, B. III.)

SPIL GOAL 3: Georgians with disabilities have access to resources and choices for a wide range of accessible, affordable, discrimination free and safe housing  
LIFE

Goal 2: To promote personal, organizational, and community growth through educating, training, and sharing personal experiences.

A. Educating--To educate consumers, staff, and the greater community about the rights of individuals with disabilities

-WP: LIFE will host speakers at IL Skills events and staff meetings who cover at least 4 of the following subjects: Fair Housing, Nursing Home Transition, SSI/SSDI, Employment, Access to Courts, Alternative Access to Print Materials, and/or Engagement with Law Enforcement; then record and upload at least 2 of them. (G2, A., I.)

Goal 3: To offer individual and community-based services and programs to enhance independent living.  
B. Community Based Services (networking; partnerships; 3rd Party directed)--To deliver community-based services to consumers in our service area.

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will participate in at least 5 meetings addressing homelessness and ensure that PwD needs are addressed. (G3, B., IV.)

SPIL GOAL 4: Georgians with disabilities are valued in all of community life as equal citizens, perceived as equal and have equal opportunities and resources to live independently  
LIFE

Goal 1: To advocate for equal access to services, programs, activities, resources and facilities.

A: Transportation--To identify consumers' unmet need with respect to transportation services in our service area and during crisis (ex. hurricane evacuation) and work to develop resources to address said need.

-WP: LIFE Staff members will collect at least 10 surveys from our consumers about their experiences during natural disasters. (G1, A., III.)

-WP: LIFE staff will share personal and consumer experience information with CAT, such as requested time vs. pick up time, timing of arrival at destination and courtesy of the drivers.

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will attend at least 6 CAT hosted meetings a year and present consumer feedback during two of them. (G1, A., IV.)

-WP: At least twice a year, LIFE staff members will offer to provide disability etiquette classes to CAT. (G1, A., V.)

B: Services--To identify barriers to access of services for our consumers and others with disabilities in our service area and work to remove or determine ways to circumvent these barriers

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will attend, at minimum, 6 community meetings promoting access to services besides transportation services each year including 2 outside of Chatham County. (G1, B., I.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will present to, at minimum, 3 organizations about how to make services more accessible for PwD. (G1, B., I.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will identify at least one community organization a year to educate on ADA requirements, work with them on compliance and highlight the collaboration in LIFE electronic media and/or newsletter. (G1, B., III.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff members will reach out quarterly to local ASL interpreters and agencies to confirm consistent usage and continued availability. (G1, B., V.)

D: Legislative--To advance community change by facilitating access by consumers to the legislative process

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will engage with (virtually, telephonically or in person) with at least two elected representatives a year. (G1, D., II.)

E: Legal--To enhance community capacity through efforts to enforce existing rights of PwD and promote access to legal resources for individuals living with disabilities in our service area

-WP: We will host at least one IL Skills event around the importance of voting and how to do so. (G1, E., I.)

-WP: We will attend at least 10 community meetings that include discussions around access to voting. (G1, E., II.)

-WP: We will publicize voter protection resources on LIFE's digital media platforms and make PwD aware of them both in the trainings and individual meetings in case issues arise. (G1, E., III.)

Goal 2: To promote personal, organizational, and community growth through educating, training, and sharing personal experiences.

A. Educating--To educate consumers, staff, and the greater community about the rights of individuals with disabilities

-WP: LIFE staff will offer disability etiquette training to at least 3 organizations/agencies in the community each year and collaborate with them to provide the training when offer is accepted. (G2, A., II.)

-WP: LIFE staff will offer at least one IL Skills training session around disability etiquette. (G2, A., III.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will promote at least two community employment efforts targeting PwD on LIFE's digital media platforms. (G2, A., IV.)

-WP: LIFE Board and Staff will reach out to at least 5 Secondary or Post-Secondary Educational organizations to make them aware of LIFE's services, including the S4L program. (G2, A., V.)

-WP: LIFE staff will put on at least 2 staff trainings about the process, pitfalls, and available supports

involved in nursing home transition efforts. (G2, A., VI.)

B. Training--To provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and other area residents to receive training that supports independent living in the community

-WP: LIFE staff will conduct at least a total of 12 peer support and IL Skills classes each year with at least two being in person, one of which to be held in expansion counties. (G2, B., I.)

-WP: LIFE staff will offer at least one IL Skills class and one staff training on ADA employment protections for PwD and/or employment incentives for hiring PwD. (G2, B., II.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will identify at least one group/organization that advocates for or facilitates recreational opportunities for PwD and contact them to see how we can help to support or grow efforts. (G2, B., III.)

C. Sharing--To facilitate the sharing of information regarding resources, upcoming events, and consumer successes with residents of our service area

-WP: LIFE staff will host or support third party efforts to hold an event that supports the hiring of PwD. (G2, C., I.)

-WP: LIFE Staff will host at least 6 social club events where PwD and community peers can get together to play games or engage in other fun activities. (G2, C., II.)

-WP: LIFE staff will provide, on LIFE's Facebook page, links to at least 5 relevant community partners supporting PwD. (G2, C., III.)

-WP: LIFE staff will create a space on LIFE's website to show relevant upcoming events from community partners. (G2, C., III.)

-WP: LIFE staff will creating an "Elections" tab on LIFE's website to provide information about voting with a focus on the rights of PwD (G2, C., III)

-WP: We will publish at least 6 success stories on one of the LIFE controlled platforms, to include LIFE's Facebook page, LIFE's newsletter, LIFE's website and LIFE's YouTube channel. (G2, C., V.)

-WP: LIFE staff will create a "Successes" tab on LIFE's website to showcase individual consumer success stories and LIFE's impact on the community. (G2, C., V.)

-WP: LIFE staff will feature at least one story per newsletter about rural county services/events LIFE participated in or wishes to promote. (G2, C., VII.)

Goal 3: To offer individual and community-based services and programs to enhance independent living.

A. Individual Services--To efficiently and effectively deliver LIFE services to individual consumers to promote independent living and empower consumers to meet their own needs.

-WP: LIFE staff will host at least 6 IL skills classes. (G3, A., II.)

-WP: LIFE staff will host at least one Peer Support event in the community. (G3, A., V.)

B. Community Based Services (networking; partnerships; 3rd Party directed)--To deliver community-based services to consumers in our service area.

-WP: LIFE staff will offer at least 6 IL Skills classes. (G3, B., I.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will meet with two organizations to discuss collaboration around a recreational program. (G3, B., II.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will participate in at least 5 meetings addressing homelessness and ensure that PwD needs are addressed. (G3, B., IV.)

C. Programs--To develop/maintain/strengthen programs designed to deliver community-based services to consumers throughout LIFE's expanded service area.

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will offer disability etiquette training to at least 5 organizations/agencies. (G3, C., I.)

-WP: LIFE Board and staff will partner with FODAC and GVRA to increase the availability of DME for PwD by participating in community meetings with both organizations and learning how to integrate consumers into the new referral process. (G3, C., II.)

- WP: LIFE Board and staff will offer LIFE's alternative formats to at least 5 community partners. (G3, C., III.)
- WP: LIFE Board and staff will offer to conduct accessibility surveys of physical and digital space for 5 organizations/institutions in the community. (G3, C., IV.)
- WP: LIFE staff will offer 5 trainings to some combination of staff and consumers on available AT offerings and record at least one. (G3, C., VIII., b.)
- WP: LIFE Board will identify one mental health initiative for LIFE to pursue. (G3, C., VIII.)

# SECTION 7 - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## Item 7.1 - Other Accomplishments, Activities and Challenges

Describe any additional significant accomplishments, activities and/or challenges not included elsewhere in the report, e.g., brief summaries of innovative practices, improved service delivery to consumers, etc.

This PPR effectively captures the breadth and diversity of LIFE's efforts to promote independent living and advance community change for everyone. As shown herein, this year represented a continued transition away from the isolation of the pandemic and towards the cautious reopening and physical re-engagement with the community. The Power of YOU! youth transition conference returned to in person for the first time since 2020, and the motivational speaker/entertainer dazzled attendees. The Strategic Plan, once limited to a year-to-year offering during a final year of Covid-related chaos, now enters the second year of its three-year term largely unchanged outside of a few minor edits to reflect altered community needs and organizational capacities, and the corresponding Work Plan for the reporting year to follow largely reflects this continuity. But the challenges from the pre-pandemic world remain, some even exacerbated by the scars left by a health crisis that still lingers. Social isolation born of a lack of viable transportation options and stretched personal incomes, which limited recreational engagement, was exacerbated by a strengthened distrust of others that grew out of quarantining. The funding funneled into the community to address Covid-related needs assisted many of LIFE's consumers impacted by generational poverty, and the CARES funding's withdrawal, coupled with rising housing prices in Savannah especially and general inflation left many in the community in need at a time when their informal support systems were the most fragile.

LIFE sought to address these endemic problems by sorting through the tools that arose during the pandemic to choose those that remained impactful, such as Zoom, identifying new funding streams to replace retired ones and deploying hereto unused assets, like the expanded office space acquired just months prior to Covid-19's appearance. LIFE rolled out the Living Well in the Community program in a hybrid format, asking that participants attend the first and last sessions, which it hosted in the back of the office in the sizable conference area, in person and providing the others virtually. Still, some chose to participate more frequently in person, and LIFE accommodated these requests, again using the conference space. The Neurodiversity Is Beautiful support group, described in the PHWF section of this report, met in person at the LIFE office in the same conference area and the positive impact on the attendees was demonstrable. Beginning in January, LIFE provided this same space to Alzheimer's Association Caregiver Support Group in the evening on the first Thursday of the month, making use of an accessible space when the office would ordinarily be closed. In an attempt to inspire engagement, LIFE hosted multiple other events in person, including a 3-D Art Peer Support Event and adorned the walls with colorful posters and a prior art project to add warmth to what had become a drab professional setting in the absence of drop-in consumers. LIFE Board, Staff and "Neurodiversity Is Beautiful" facilitators and participants began to explore space reorganization. They hoped in the year to follow to redesign the space and thereby make it more usable for group purposes as well as more practical for employment-focused collaborations and training ventures moving forward. LIFE, through the use of Women United funding tried to offer some reprieve to transportation costs through gas cards and access barriers by tapping into area ride-share options through Uber/Lyft gift cards. LIFE's ED was invited and joined the CAT Smart community stakeholder committee to provide representation,

feedback and engagement and then help spread the word about the demonstration project focused on advanced smart city/technology to improve transit efficiency and safety through the use of federal grant funding to purchase electric vehicles to deploy in an on-demand network. LIFE also participated in Chatham Connects meetings to provide feedback about the current system in order to prompt changes during future planning efforts. It pursued all of these efforts in the hope of addressing long-standing transportation issues.

On the leadership side, a particularly noteworthy highlight this year was LIFE's Program Director's participation in the inaugural United Way of the Coastal Empire Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) Nonprofit Leadership Symposium. The six-session training provided training on the following topics: 1) Organizational Assessment; 2) Budgeting and Financial Management; 3) Performance Measures and Outcomes; 4) Grant Writing; 5) Strategic Planning; and 6) Marketing. By growing her managerial skills through these trainings, the Program Director further bolstered the three-person administrative team described herein which tasked with managing the day-to-day Center operations. To address the shortage of consumers outside of Chatham County, an issue noted by the ACL feedback about Section 3.8, one must first identify why such a disparity exists, a process LIFE has already been engaged in. Internal staff discussions on this subject have revealed some of the realities that artificially suppress consumer numbers and thereby lessen LIFE's impact in its outlying areas. To begin, as with many CILs, there are geographic challenges. LIFE's Southeastern Georgia service area is largely rural outside of Chatham County, where Savannah, Georgia's 5th largest city by population sits. The only other Georgia city in LIFE's service area in the top 50 is Pooler, also located in Chatham County. As a tourist hub, the number of people in Savannah on any given day greatly exceeds its permanent population, and many of LIFE's systems advocacy efforts reflected in the Community Activities table show how organizational efforts to benefit PwD living in Chatham County also help those PwD visiting the area, too.

Apart from systems advocacy impacts, in order to meet consumers where they live in the largest numbers, LIFE situated its primary office in Savannah. However, LIFE staff are aware that many potential consumers reside in its other 10 counties. Here, the geographic size of the service area and its lack of population density become problematic. A sizable portion of the staff at LIFE are blind or low-vision and do not drive, making travel out to locations challenging. Like most of rural America, many of LIFE's counties have limited transportation offerings and resources available. Though LIFE has traditionally hosted events at its office in Savannah, since the beginning of Covid lockdowns it has been offering IL Skills classes and Peer Support groups in hybrid formats and continues to do so to this day. However, group Zoom events do not allow for the individualized conversations needed to establish goals and create the buy-in needed from LIFE consumers.

A second issue, and one that echoes the buy-in challenges of individuals over Zoom, is the number of individuals who choose to call in as I&R's but never take the steps to become consumers. The sound of a ringing phone is a staple of the Savannah office, as PwD from LIFE's service area call looking for resources, frequently to address their current crisis. Unfortunately, people in crisis are not focused on planning, prioritizing immediate needs over the long-term, process driven solutions offered by LIFE. As many of these callers are seeking help paying past due water bills (a service we do not provide but which we know of organizations that do), help finding housing (something that often takes years to find), and home modifications/assistive technology/durable medical equipment (items we can provide only to consumers on a much more limited basis using fair housing settlement funding, other grants, and through our existing GVRA and FODAC contracts), the one-off conversations initiated by non-consumers cannot fully address their needs.

Subsequent follow up calls are often unreturned, as the individual gives up and moves on to the next potential quick fix option, and inboxes that are either full or were never set up greet the LIFE staff caller. Though the current crisis is often a symptom of an underlying problem, such in depth issues cannot be addressed on the initial call, and callers seeking something specific frequently end the call upon learning of potential barriers or even delays in delivering the solution they had imagined. Those that are willing to hear more often balk at completing voluminous paperwork necessary to make them a consumer, or, even when willing, struggle to complete it correctly when it is mailed to them, regardless of how it is flagged and highlighted.



The above four paragraphs describe some of the root causes of the long-standing struggle to sign up consumers in outlying counties that LIFE has faced throughout its current Executive Director's tenure as well as prior to his arrival. Continued refinement of service delivery approaches coupled with new opportunities to reach into the community represent the best chance to tackle the issue.

To begin, though many of LIFE staff cannot drive, the three newest hires can, since their job responsibilities required the ability to travel into the community which often otherwise lacks many transportation options, as noted above. The Support Coordinator (hired in September), the part-time Community Outreach Coordinator (hired in December) and the Office Manager/Community Educator (hired in April) all assist in projecting into the community, especially in the underserved counties. LIFE will grow its staff capacity not only by adding these new staff members but also through intensive trainings across the Spring of 2024 for both new and existing staff. These trainings will focus on how to recognize I&R requests that should be developed into goals and how to build goals that are clearly defined and finite enough in duration to be achievable. By helping I&R callers and meeting participants see their current efforts as work towards, if not completion of, independent living goals, LIFE staff will frame successes and change the individual's perception of goal setting from that of a responsibility to that of a tool that helps them do what they want to do. Additionally, to overcome documentation challenges, LIFE will create fillable PDF's to allow consumers to fill out and submit paperwork even if they don't have access to a printer. LIFE ED's experience manning a table at a Georgia Advocacy Office vaccine event and info fair hosted at a shelter serving Chatham County's unhoused population revealed the need to meet people where they are in the community despite the logistical challenges of doing so. As such, LIFE is seeking opportunities to borrow office space at community partner sites monthly or bi-monthly in other counties, especially where some of LIFE staff already live, to allow for in-person meetings without burdening potential consumers with the need to find and fund transportation into the Savannah office. LIFE staff, inclusive of Coordinators and the Executive Director, will continue to reach out to their contacts at other CILs, explore IL-NET offerings, and attend regional partnership collaboratives like the Southeast Center Directors' Association to find additional new and innovative solutions.

The primary institutional and organizational supports in many of LIFE's less populated areas are the schools, area agencies on aging (there are three which serve LIFE counties), county Family Connections groups, and senior centers. LIFE will continue to attend county Family Connections meetings with IL Coordinators assigned to specific meetings for purposes of continuity and the quarterly ADRC meetings. It will also continue its outreach efforts to places of worship. Additionally, LIFE's Program Director will continue to man the AT lab at the Coastal ADRC in Darien, providing in-person access (Coastal Regional Coaches is hosted in the same building, offering a cost-effective paratransit option to most of LIFE's service counties and a shorter trip for those in its southern counties).

However, there will be a momentous change in the scope of services offered with the Coastal Area Agency on Aging. On April 19th, LIFE learned the Coastal AAA awarded the winning bid to LIFE for contracts to provide assistive technology to older adults on the homemaker waiting list as well as an Evidence Based Programming contract (EBP) to educate Older Adults about healthy living. Prior facilitators of the EBP have partnered with Senior Centers, and LIFE has already begun outreach to such organizations. Negotiations to finalize the details will begin on 5/2, and the contracts will begin 7/1. These two contracts promise the opportunity to be in front of many more people.



<b>Training And Technical Assistance Needs</b>	<b>Choose up to 10 Priority Needs --- Rate items 1-10 with 1 being most important</b>
<p><b>Financial: Grant Management</b>  General Overview  Federal Regulations  Budgeting  Fund Accounting</p> <p><b>Financial: Resource Development</b>  General Overview  Diversification of Funding Base  Fee-for-Service Approaches  For Profit Subsidiaries  Fund-Raising Events of Statewide Campaigns  Grant Writing</p> <p><b>Independent Living Philosophy</b>  General Overview</p> <p><b>Innovative Programs</b>  Best Practices  Specific Examples</p> <p><b>Management Information Systems</b>  Computer Skills  Software</p> <p><b>Marketing and Public Relations</b>  General Overview  Presentation/Workshop Skills  Community Awareness</p> <p><b>Networking Strategies</b>  General Overview  Electronic  Among CILs &amp; SILCs  Community Partners</p> <p><b>Program Planning</b>  General Overview of Program Management and Staff Development  CIL Executive Directorship Skills Building  Conflict Management and Alternative Dispute Resolution  First-Line CIL Supervisor Skills Building  IL Skills Modules  Peer Mentoring  Program Design  Time Management  Team Building</p> <p><b>Outreach to Unserved/Underserved Populations</b>  General Overview  Disability  Minority</p>	<p>6</p> <p>3</p> <p>7</p>



# PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE (PHWF) - DATA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grant Number	2205GAILPH
Reporting Period	10/01/2022 - 09/30/2023
State	GA

## Item 1 - Total Number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs)

Total Number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs)	0.46
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## Item 2 - Type of Public Health Professional(s) Hired

Type	#
Case Investigator	0
Contact Tracer	0
Social Support Specialist	0.24
Community Health Worker	0
Public Health Nurse	0
Disease Intervention Specialist	0
Epidemiologist	0
Program Manager	0
Laboratory Personnel	0
Informaticians	0
Communication and Policy Experts	0.22

## Item 3 - The Activities They Are Engaged In To Advance Public Health

Public Health Workforce funding was used to bring professional expertise to LIFE to the benefit of its consumers.

This included the creation of a number of new positions, though the timing of their creation and staffing, in coordination with the part-time nature of one of them led to the .46 FTE above. LIFE brought in a long-time newspaper editor in the role of Website/Digital Media Specialist to help with outreach strategies and website copy development. LIFE also created the position of Support Coordinator to add a fresh perspective to the nursing home transition and home modification programs and the ability to grow capacity in both needed areas. The individual presently serving in this role is a Registered Behavioral Technician with experience working with children with developmental disabilities. Her transition into the Support Coordinator position has brought a fresh perspective, and her lived experience dealing with loss has helped strengthen the resolve of those working to leave institutional settings as well as those seeking to re-engage with their communities after they were prevented from

doing so by physical barriers that prevented safe navigation of and departure from the home.

LIFE also directed funds towards bringing professional training to the Center staff. LIFE sent three staff members to the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) Conference in Savannah. LIFE serves an area that annually faces the prospect of hurricane landfall. Thus, learning how to preemptively identify and plan for incoming storms as well as how to effectively communicate with emergency managers both prior to and after such an event was a huge benefit to LIFE's consumers.

LIFE brought in an expert to train LIFE staff on ASL through the provision of a 10-week program beginning in July. Classes were taught by Sallie McClelland, who has an associate degree in Deaf Studies from Ogeechee Technical College and 30+ years of interpreting and interaction with the Deaf community. Nine LIFE staff members participated in the classes. The goal of the classes was to provide students with enough ASL vocabulary to be able to communicate with Deaf individuals should the opportunity arise, as well as an understanding of the history of sign language, types of sign language, and Deaf culture.

The outline of topics included:

- I. Purpose of the classes
- II. Difference Between ASL and Signed English
- III. History of ASL
- IV. Manual Alphabet/Fingerspelling
- V. Numbers
- VI. Parameters of a sign
- VII. Some basic signs
- VIII. How to Communicate after the Basics
- IX. Interpreting
- X. Lip Reading and "Deaf talk"
- XI. Deaf/Blind
- XII. Deaf Culture
- XIII. Slang

Students were provided with links to various websites, including some with manual verbal descriptions, which can be used to research signs.

Classes have continued into the current fiscal year so students can continue to learn additional signs and become more proficient in communication with the Deaf.

When TravelAbility, a travel conference focused on accessible travel, came to Savannah, LIFE worked closely with them, both attending the conference and ensuring it was fully accessible. Using PHWF money, LIFE was able to contract with two ASL interpreters to ensure that an attendee could fully participate in the Conference, supplementing existing supports that covered only some of the Conference subgroups. After the Conference, we received the following email from one of the attendees thanking us for the support we provided, "I appreciate your immediate assistance for [Attendee] at TravelAbility, [LIFE STAFF MEMBER]. Despite the kinks along the way, for which [Attendee] is so gracious, I know she is very appreciative to have the translators at the conference. She really enjoyed being there and was impressed with the content being shared at EMS. If [LIFE] had not provided that service for [Attendee], she would not have attended. I'm sending this note with much gratitude and appreciation for what you're doing to support and enrich the lives of those in your community and beyond."

Another initiative was the creation of the Neurodiversity Is Beautiful support group. This project, designed by a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral and facilitated by both this individual and a

Licensed Professional Counselor, Certified Clinical Trauma Professional, included a comprehensive approach to empowering neurodiverse adults to successfully navigate through social situations and become fluent in skills that empower them to become more independent members of their communities.

The project included creating a peer group, developing program curriculum for the group, and using evidence-based methods to assist attendees to demonstrate acquisition, fluency, mastery, and generalization of important life skills. The selected skills are specific to the overall goal of empowering the support group attendees to develop and maintain meaningful relationships and become more independent in their community. At the conclusion of the initial offering, the leaders created a Neurodiversity Social Skills Group curriculum which provides an eight-lesson framework to tweak, supplement, grow and deploy for future participants.

# SECTION 9 - SIGNATURES

Please sign and print the names, titles and telephone numbers of the CIL director and board chair.

NAME AND TITLE OF CENTER DIRECTOR \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF CENTER DIRECTOR \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME AND TITLE OF CENTER BOARD CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF CENTER BOARD CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_