

Compass IL is a community based, nonresidential, private nonprofit agency that is staffed and governed by people with disabilities. Our focus is to empower people in making choices that maintain or increase their independence.

We serve people with disabilities, their families, and the community in which they live. We also work with area businesses and service providers that need assistance in responding to the needs of people with disabilities.

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Navigating Toward Independence and Freedom

2920 SCHNEIDER AVE SE
MENOMONIE, WI 54751

APRIL — JUNE 2025

Note from the Executive Director

Summer is here, and I am looking forward to all the activities the center has going on this summer. Recently, we welcomed two new staff members in Independent Living, Britany Sabby, and in Transportation, Bao Lee. We had our adaptive bikes at one event so far, and are looking forward to partnering with a couple of area biking organizations to have them available at events this summer. Staff are busy with outreach activities as well, still getting the word out that we are now Compass IL.



On May 7th, Compass IL hosted a “Coffee and Commerce” event sponsored by the Dunn County Chamber of Commerce, bringing together area nonprofits to discuss issues affecting their agencies. The event had good attendance, with over 30 participants, and we had a good discussion on issues such as federal funding, impact on services being provided, and opportunities for collaboration.

We are still in the process of planning our planning committee for the 45th Anniversary celebration on October 24 from 12 pm – 5 pm at the center. We have a couple of great speakers lined up, along with other activities. Stay tuned for more information in the next newsletter!

The Passing of a Leader

It is with great sadness that we mourn the passing of Timothy J. Sheehan, who passed away on June 1st. Tim was Executive Director at the Center for Independent Living for Western Wisconsin (CILWW), now Compass IL, for 20 years. He was also a dedicated advocate for persons with disabilities at both the State and National levels who championed the Independent Living movement. Tim first served on the Board of Directors at CILWW, and then left the board to become Assistant Director in 1998, when the center moved from UW-Stout to our current home in the Technology Park. Tim was promoted to Executive Director by the board in 2001 and served in that role until his retirement in 2021.

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Visit from Area Legislators

On May 22, Senator Jess Smith, Representative Jodi Emerson, and Representative Christian Phelps visited Compass IL for a tour of the center and a round table discussion on the services we provide. It was a great opportunity for the staff to talk about what they do in their jobs and for the legislators to learn about all of the different services and programs we provide. I am looking forward to having other area legislators visit the center for a tour, and we always extend an invitation when we are at IL Days or reaching out to legislators when advocating for persons with disabilities.

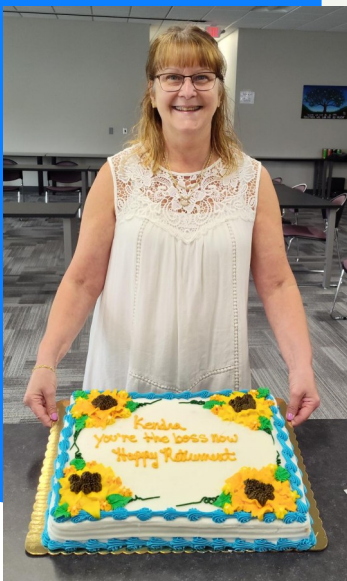


Compass IL Staff Highlight

We'd like to take this time to highlight and thank Kendra for her 3 years of being at Compass IL, and wish her a very happy retirement!

Kendra Bosse —Transportation Specialist

I live in Menomonie with my husband Brad. We have one daughter that just got married last year. I started working here in April of 2022. I was hired as a Transportation Specialist. We give rides to elderly and/or disabled people. Each specialist has certain counties that we take care of. We take phone calls and answer emails from riders and care managers. Then we look for a driver that could do the ride for them. We also calculate copays and communicate with our drivers by email or phone.



Happy Retirement

Welcome New Staff

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Brittany Sabby
Information & Referral Specialist

My name is Brittany and I am back to work at Compass IL after 5 years. I live here in Menomonie with my husband and three sons ages 3-8. Being a boy mom is the biggest adventure and joy I could imagine. A couple other things that make me happy are going to concerts and visiting the ocean.



Bao Lee
Transportation Specialist

Hey there! My name is Bao & I live in Menomonie, Wisconsin. I am blessed to share life's adventures with my 9-year-old daughter & her "dragon" Mochii (Bearded dragon). When I'm out of the office, I enjoy going to concerts, festivals, hanging out with my friends & family, listening to music, fashion & make up. What motivates me every day is my faith & being grateful for everything I have, waking up is the first blessing of everyday.

Volunteer Driver Highlight



Meet the driver: Ray
Statezny

Ray is 3rd generation living on a family piece of property, Ray lived in Kenosha for a small bit and then went back

home to Forest County.

Ray was his own boss, being a mechanic of all trades before he retired. Ray has been married to his wife for 57 years, and has 5 kids, and has been raising 2 of his grandkids for the last, 14 years and has 11 grandkids total. Ray started out driving on his own in 1998 helping out people who needed it, then started driving for Forest County and then on to New Freedom in 2018. Ray loves to fish whether it is ice

fishing or summertime fishing, and have beautiful big vegetable gardens. A favorite memory he has is in 1966 Ray drove route 66 from Chicago to Los Angeles.

Ray really enjoys driving and meeting so many new people and he says he likes to become friends with them the minute they get in his car and starts talking with them. Thank You Ray!

Support your community by becoming a Volunteer Driver!

For more information, contact Melissa at melw@compassil.org or call 715.233.1070 and ask for Melissa.



Annual Caregiver Training

PAS recently completed our annual caregiver training sessions in Menomonie and Rice Lake. The training featured speakers from Stepping Stones, the Respite Care Association of Wisconsin, and St. Vincent De Paul.

The caregivers appreciated the diversity of speakers, and this year's focus was on food insecurities.



***Help empower
our community
members to live
an independent
lifestyle within
their own
homes!***

Become a Caregiver

Compass IL's Personal Assistant Services program offers:

- competitive wages,
- flexible scheduling,
- paid travel for qualifying consumers,
- and paid training.

Interested individuals please contact Samantha at slotts@compassil.org for further information or call 715.233.1070.





Assistive Technology Demonstration & Loan Program

WisTech is Wisconsin's Assistive Technology (AT) program. AT is a device or service that allows people to function as independently as possible at home, school, work, and in the community. CILWW is a regional AT Device and Demonstration Center. CILWW has almost 2,000 different AT devices that we can loan and/or demonstrate to people. CILWW staff can bring devices to people's homes, answer questions about devices, loan devices for a short period of time, give vendor and funding resources, and use their experience to help find the most cost effective options.

Check out our new Assistive Technology devices!

Easy Reach Seat Belt Grabber Handle

Compass IL is showcasing a very practical piece of assistive technology: the Easy Reach Seat Belt Grabber Handle. This lightweight and flexible device offers users an easier way to access their seat belts, making it particularly beneficial for individuals with limited dexterity in their shoulders, those with arthritis, or anyone facing difficulties reaching for their seat belts without strain.

The Easy Reach Seat Belt Grabber Handle attaches to the seat belt and creates an extended grip, allowing for easier access without requiring excessive shoulder movement or twisting of the torso.



Constructed from durable lightweight ethylene methyl acrylate resin, the handle measures 9.5 inches in length and 2.5 inches in width, making it convenient to carry for outings. This device is available through various online retailers, such as Walmart and Amazon, with a retail price of approximately \$9.00.



Garden Kneeler

Spring has arrived, and Compass IL encourages you to enjoy outdoor activities such as gardening, weeding, or pruning. To support these activities, we recommend the garden kneeler, an assistive device designed to reduce strain on your knees and minimize fatigue. This versatile tool allows users to comfortably lower themselves to the ground with ample cushioning and can be flipped over to function as a seat.

Constructed from a durable, heavy-duty steel frame capable of supporting up to 250 pounds, the garden kneeler measures 24 inches in length, 10.8 inches in width, and 19.7 inches in height. The seat dimensions are 16 inches by 6.1 inches. The foam pad is made from soft, slip-resistant premium EVA material, enhancing comfort

during gardening tasks and alleviating pressure on the knees. This device is particularly beneficial for individuals managing arthritis, back issues, or limited mobility.

Various options are available on Amazon and Walmart, with prices ranging from \$25 to \$70.

Compass IL offers the opportunity for individuals to borrow or try out items mentioned in our articles before making a purchase.

To learn more about this assistive device or other devices that can improve your independence, please contact CILWW at 715.233.1070 or 800.228.3287. Our services are provided free of charge. However, we do not directly fund the purchase of assistive technology. Through the WisTech Assistive Technology Program, CIL provides a variety of services, including information on alternative financing options like WisLoan, Telework, and TEPP, upon request.

AT Programs & Services

TEPP

WisLoan + Telework

Loan programs designed for
Wisconsinites with disabilities



Independence First
The Resource For People With Disabilities

Are you or someone you know....

- Having difficulty hearing or using the telephone?
- Hard of hearing?
- Deaf or severely hard of hearing?
- Mobility/Motion impaired?
- Speech impaired?
- Deaf with low vision or blindness?
- Deaf and blind?



If you answered yes, you may be interested in finding the AT you need to access telephone services. Equipment could be amplified phones, captioning phones, neck loops, and other devices. Schedule an appointment to try a variety of equipment with one on one assistance from knowledgeable and experienced staff!

Staff can also help you apply for funding through TEPP: Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Program. Money collected through WI telephone service providers goes into the WI Universal Service Fund, which pays for TEPP. CIL's role is to help you access the funding you need to get the equipment you need!

Loan Programs

WisLoan offers loans to help people buy assistive technology or equipment such as modified vehicles, wheelchairs, and ramps. There are no income requirements and individuals are not required to exhaust personal or public funding. Under the program, banks provide loans at a fixed interest rate of 6.5% to qualified borrowers. Loan amounts depend on the item and ability to repay.

Telework is a loan program that allows residents with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment needed to work from home or from other remote sites away from the office, such as work on the road or at a Telework center.

The Passing of a Leader

Continued from page 1

Tim helped to make the Center what it is today and was instrumental in expanding both the Independent Living and Personal Assistant Services programs, and starting the New Freedom Transportation Program.

In the 20 years Tim was Executive Director at CILWW, he served on numerous State and National committees and councils advocating for persons with disabilities.



On the national level, he was the Region 5 representative on the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) for several years, served twice on the board for the Association and Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL), and was the board chair before his retirement. On the State level, Tim served two terms on the State Independent Living Council, served as Chair of the Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers (WCILC) twice, and other councils and committees advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Tim was dedicated to the IL Movement and served as a dependable, unwavering advocate and a brilliant guy. The more time you spent with him, the more you learned about his truly exceptional life experiences. A long-time journalist before finding his way to Independent Living, he was a wealth of information and gave generously of his time.

We here at Compass IL will remember Tim's larger-than-life personality, his wonderful storytelling, and most of all his leadership, caring, and respect for all the staff at the Center. On a personal note, I will always be thankful that Tim was my friend and mentor and passed on to me the passion that he had for Independent Living and advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities. Tim may be gone, but he will never be forgotten!



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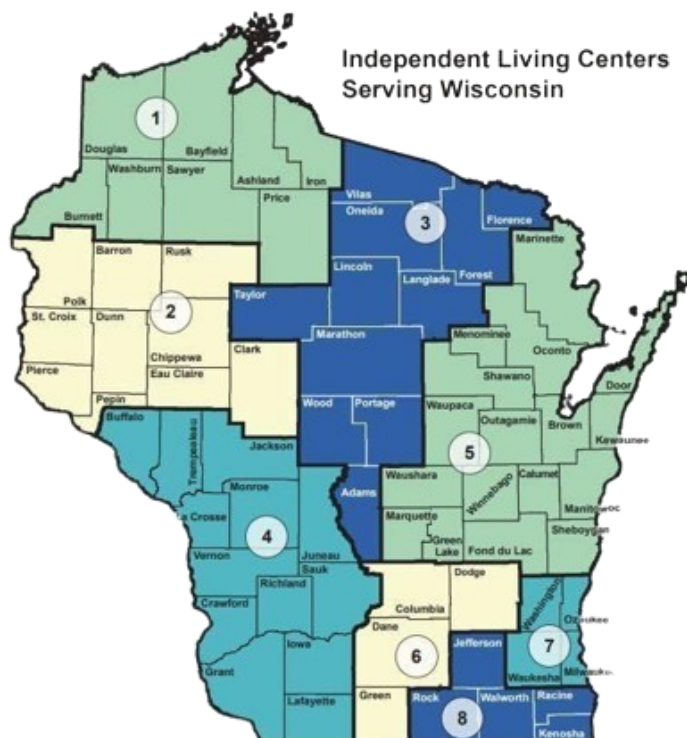
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Find your local Independent Living Center

Did you know that Wisconsin has 8 Independent Living Centers? Independent living centers (ILCs) are consumer controlled, community based, cross disability, nonresidential private nonprofit agencies that are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities, and provide an array of independent living services.

Need help finding a personal care attendant? Looking for advice or support from someone with the same disability as you? Want to find an accessible form of recreation? All this and much more is available at your local independent living center.



1. indIGO
2. Compass IL
3. Midstate Independent Living Choices
4. Independent Living Resources

5. Options for Independent Living
6. Access to Independence
7. IndependenceFirst
8. Society's Assests