

Town of Richmond

Request for Special Appropriations

Request for Fiscal Year: 2023

Organization's Name: VT Center for Independent Living

Address: 11 East State Street

City, State, Zip: Montpelier, VT 05602

Website address: www.vcil.org

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Program Name: N/A

2. Contact Person/Title: Linda Meleady, Development Coordinator

Telephone Number: 802-224-1819 E-mail address: lindam@vcil.org

3. Total number of individuals served in the last complete fiscal year by this program: ~2,800.

4. Total number of the above individuals who are Town residents: 6

Please attach any documentation that supports this number. Please see attached summary report.

Percent of people served who are Town residents: <1%

5. Amount of Request: \$375.00

6. Total Program Budget: \$3,141,083.00

Percent of total program budget you are requesting from the Town of Richmond: <.01%

7. Please state or attach the mission of your agency: Please see attached.

8. Will the funding be used to:

X Maintain an existing program Expand an Existing Program

Start a new program

9. Has your organization received funds from the Town in the past for this or a similar program? Yes.

If yes, please answer the following:

a. Does the amount of your request represent an increase over your previous appropriation? If yes, explain the reason(s) for the increase. N/A

b. Were any conditions or restrictions placed on the funds by the Selectboard? If yes, describe how those conditions or restrictions have been met. N/A

B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. Statement of Need: Identify the issue or need that the program will address (use statistical data to justify the need for the program). To what extent does this need or problem exist in the Town of Richmond?

VCIL has specific programs that benefit the residents of Richmond, including the Sue Williams Freedom Fund, which provides grant dollars for assistive technology not otherwise covered by insurance (hearing aids, vehicle modifications, scooters etc), Meals on Wheels for people under the age of 60 and who have a disability (the Council on Aging serves people over the age of 60) and the Home Access Program, providing ramps and bathroom modifications to residents. VCIL's Peer Advocate Counselors (PACs) offer peer-to-peer services for people seeking assistance because of barriers they are experiencing. All of our PACs have disabilities themselves and have navigated many of these barriers already. This past year one resident received meals on wheels through our Meals on Wheels program and 5 residents contacted our I&R specialist.

In addition to people served, VCIL offers technical assistance to the business community on the Americans with Disabilities Act and other disability-related laws.

According to the U.S. Census, 20 percent of Vermonters have a disability. The programs offered at VCIL to residents of Richmond afford them greater independence.

2. Program Summary:

- a. Identify the target/recipients of program services. Specify the number of Town residents your program will serve during the fiscal year and explain the basis upon which this number is calculated. Indicate any eligibility requirements your program has with respect to age, gender, income or residence.

In the previous year, VCIL served six residents of Richmond. Considering that 20 percent of the population has a disability, this number can vary greatly from year to year depending on the needs of the residents.

In addition to the number of residents, the type of service will vary. Some business owners needing technical assistance can reach out for a quick phone call, while another resident may need a home modification which can cost up to \$15,000.

Eligibility varies from program to program. For the business community, anyone that has a question about disability-related laws can contact us.

For the Home Access Program and Sue Williams Freedom Fund there are income limits (must not exceed 80 percent of the HUD median income), and one must have a disability that directly relates to the need requested (home modification or assistive technology). Our Meals on Wheels program is for people with disabilities under the age of 60 (Council on Aging takes over at 60).

The Peer Advocate Counseling Program is offered to anyone who has a disability and wants to work on specific independent living goals. The peer must be engaged in the process of working on goals identified.

New this past year is the RISE fund (Resilience and Independence in a State of Emergency) which can provide a variety of items or services if the need is directly related to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

- b. Identify what is to be accomplished or what change will occur from participating in the program. How will people be better off as a result of participating in the program? Describe the steps you take to make the project known to the public, and make the program accessible and inclusive?

VCIL staff work with program participants to develop an Independent Living plan and that plan addresses specific goals to living independently and the steps needed to obtain the goals. The peer advocate counseling staff work with peers to achieve those goals. Residents on our Meals on Wheels program receive one hot and nutritious meal a day which they do not feel they are able to do on their own in their current living situation. Our outreach team continues to work to let more people know who VCIL is and what we do with a focus on underserved populations. We launched a new website in July to be more accessible and user friendly in addition to having a translate option for people who speak other languages. We recently ran 2 digital ads with VT Digger and are in the process of running google ads. We have a PSA about VCIL and videos are on YouTube for our Youth Transition Program. Our PACs travel to schools to discuss what the options are after high school.

Other outreach techniques include social media (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube), VCIL's website, and outreach to community organizations, the state and other partners about our services/programs. With the current pandemic our PACs are really going above and beyond and delivering groceries or providing transportation options. In April we sent out our 2nd round of "care packages" to almost 500 peers which contained masks, coloring calendar, colored pencils, crossword and word search puzzles, a bar of soap from the Vermont Soap company, a chocolate cow, note cards and stamps and a Covid-19 resource sheet. The responses we received from peers touched our hearts.

VCIL strives to be accessible and inclusive. We have policies and procedures for reasonable accommodations. We complete cultural competency assessments and continuously work to be more inclusive of our programming. Additional race training will take place in FY'22,

3. Program Funding:

- a. Identify how Town funds, specifically, will be used (i.e., funds will provide "X" amount of units of service.)

VCIL will use the funding for our Peer Advocacy Counseling Program (PAC) and for Information, Referral and Assistance (IR&A). These programs are at the heart of VCIL's work and allow residents to access information about disability-related laws, services and programs. The PAC program provides residents one-on-one support when overcoming barriers they are experiencing because of disability. We work with residents to develop an Independent Living Plan and set goals. We then work one on one in helping residents achieve those goals. Our peer counselors all have disabilities themselves and understand through personal experience and training how to overcome obstacles that people with disabilities often face, especially when seeking housing, employment and transportation services.

- b. List the other agencies to whom you are submitting a request for funds for this program and the amount requested. How would this program be modified should revenues be lost? VCIL appreciates the assistance from the town and these funds, combined with grants received from other organizations, cities/towns and private donations, enable us to offer the services when needed to individuals with disabilities. (please see attached budget and FY'22 Towns Requesting allocations from)

C. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

1. Describe your agency's capability to provide the program including its history, previous experience providing this service, management structure and staff expertise.

Since 1979, the Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL) has provided services to enhance the lives of people with disabilities with a vision of people with disabilities living independently and staying where they choose, in their Richmond home.

VCIL evaluates the needs of individuals with disabilities through an annual survey. The need of individuals range from getting and understanding information to access programs/services, accessing transportation, needs for meals on wheels and accessibility modifications in the home. Many of the individuals VCIL works with are considered "vulnerable" and through support and other services residents are less exposed to vulnerabilities. VCIL employs people who have disabilities and they work 1:1 with residents who have disabilities and use their personal experience as an individual who has a disability to help others navigate complicated systems, and teach the skills that allow individuals to be more confident and advocate for their own needs.

VCIL provides technical assistance to business owners and municipalities on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other disability related laws. This allows for businesses to be less exposed to complaints and litigation and allows people with disabilities to have access to goods, services and employment opportunities.

VCIL provides home access modifications to those who have physical disabilities and need a ramp or bathroom access, Meals on Wheels to people with disabilities under the age of 60 who cannot prepare their own meal, assistive technology grants and farm assessments. VCIL is also home to the VT Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (VTEDP) which provides telecommunications equipment to enable low-income Deaf, Deaf-blind, and hard of hearing individuals to communicate by telephone.

These services all make a difference in individual lives and allow individuals with disabilities to achieve personal goals of living in their own home, raising children, going to community outings, employment and volunteerism.

2. How will you assess whether/how program participants are better off? Describe how you will assess program outcomes. Your description should include: what (what kind of data), how (method/tool for collecting the data), from whom (source of data) and when (timing of data collection).

Every January, VCIL sends out a survey to over 1,000 peers statewide that measures overall satisfaction with VCIL, what has improved in their life as a result of working with VCIL, advocacy issues peers would like to see us focus on and satisfaction within the particular program peer was enrolled in. This past year's survey focused on support groups in light of the pandemic. We currently have a Traumatic Brain Injury and a Deaf and Hard of Hearing support group and asked what other groups people would be interested in. It became very clear based on the results of the survey that interaction of any type was a priority for people that were feeling even more isolated than pre-pandemic. Several of our Peer Advocate Counselors, along with other staff members have formed a group called BUDZ (Being Uniquely Diverse on Zoom). These groups have several different meeting dates and times to try and accommodate as many peers as possible. Although it is fairly new the response has been very positive and our peers seem to appreciate being able to "meet" with folks to discuss a variety of topics. Topics are peer driven.

As an organization, VCIL uses Results Based Accountability as the tool for evaluation and planning. We also see the direct result of skills training and social interaction in the increase in peer leaders who are conducting workshops, facilitating meetings, and talking to their legislators about advocacy issues that affect them. An audit at the end of a fiscal year to determine how many of our peers have reached their set goal is also a way for our Peer Advocate Counselors (PACs) to measure success or to follow-up with said peer to find out what else needs to be done.

3. Summarize or attach program and or service assessments conducted in the past two years.

Please find peer survey attached. In addition, programs within VCIL have evaluation procedures.

4. Does your organization have a strategic plan and a strategic planning process in place? If yes, please attach your plan.

The strategic plan should include a mission statement, goals, and action steps to achieve the goals, and measures that assess the accomplishments of the goals.

Please find our strategic plan attached.


5. What is the authorized size of your board of directors? Up to 15 members.

How many meetings were held by the board last year?

Full board meetings are held quarterly, in addition we have Program, Development, Executive and Finance Committees made up of board members, and the committees meet six times a year.

6. Does your organization have an audit performed? If yes, the audit must be provided to the Town Manager upon request. Yes.

I, the undersigned, confirm the information contained herein is accurate and can be verified as such. I understand and agree that if the requested funds are approved, the disbursement of funds are subject to all conditions established by the Richmond Selectboard.

Signature of Applicant:  Date: 09/30/2021

Print Name of Applicant and Title: Sarah Launderville, Executive Director

**A.4 THE VERMONT CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING
TOWN OF RICHMOND
SUMMARY REPORT**

Request Amount: \$375.00

For the last 42 years, The Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL) has been teaching people with disabilities and the Deaf how to gain more control over their lives and how to access tools and services to live more independently. VCIL employees (85% of whom have a disability) conduct public education, outreach, individual advocacy and systems change advocacy to help promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities into community life.

In FY'21 (10/2020-9/2021) VCIL responded to thousands of requests from individuals, agencies and community groups for information, referral and assistance and program services for individuals living with a disability. VCIL Peer Advocate Counselors (PACs) provided one-on-one peer counseling to **186** individuals to help increase their independent living skills and **4** peers were served by the AgrAbility program. VCIL's Home Access Program (HAP) assisted **148** households with information on technical assistance and/or alternative funding for modifications; **65** of these received financial assistance to make their bathrooms and/or entrances accessible. Our Sue Williams Freedom Fund (SWFF) provided **80** individuals with information on assistive technology; **42** of these individuals received funding to obtain adaptive equipment. **484** individuals had meals delivered through our Meals on Wheels (MOW) program for individuals with disabilities under the age of 60. We are also home to the Vermont Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (VTEDP) which served **35** people and provided **24** peers with adaptive telecommunications enabling low-income Deaf, Deaf-blind, Hard of Hearing and individuals with disabilities to communicate by telephone. Due to the pandemic VCIL was able to start a new (temporary) program, Resilience and Independence in a State of Emergency (RISE) which served 415 people in its first year. The Rise Program can help provide an array of items or services if the needs are directly related to the Covid-19 epidemic.

VCIL's central office is located in downtown Montpelier and we have five branch offices in Bennington, Chittenden, Lamoille, Rutland and Windham Counties. Our PACs and services are available to people with disabilities throughout Vermont. Our Montpelier office also houses the Vermont Interpreter Referral Service (VIRS) and provides statewide interpreter referral services for sign language, spoken English and CART services for assignments in medical, legal, mental health, employment, educational, civil and recreational settings.

During FY'21, **6** residents of **Richmond** received services from the following programs:

- Meals on Wheels (MOW)
(\$**185.00** spent on meals for residents)
- Information Referral and Assistance (I,R&A)

To learn more about VCIL, please call VCIL's toll-free I-Line at:
1-800-639-1522, or, visit our web site at **www.vcil.org**.

7

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Vermont Center for Independent Living is to empower Vermonters with disabilities, Deaf Vermonters, and others to tear down the physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers that keep us from realizing our full human potential.

Together, we will build communities to:

- achieve our human and civil rights and equal access to services and opportunities;
- have available ongoing resources and options for independent Living;
- realize our power to control and direct our own lives.

We join together to celebrate our diversity and the common goal for the full inclusion of all persons in the life of our communities.

B.3.b**C&T's VCIL Requested Appropriations From**

Albany	Granby	Poultney	Weathersfield
Alburgh	Granville	Pownal	Wells
Arlington	Greensboro	Proctor	West Fairlee
Barnet	Guildhall	Randolph	West Windsor
Barre City	Hartford	Readsboro	Westfield
Barre Town	Hartland	Richmond	Westminister
Belvidere	Highgate	Royalton	Westmore
Bennington	Hinesburg	Rupert	Weston
Berkshire	Holland	Rutland	Wheelock
Berlin	Hubbardton	Ryegate	Williamstown
Bethel	Huntington	S. Burlington	Williston
Bloomfield	Jay	Sandgate	Woodbury
Brattleboro	Jericho	Searsburg	Woodford
Bridport	Leicester	Shaftsbury	Worcester
Brighton	Lemington	Sheffield	
Brookfield	Lowell	Sheldon	
Brookline	Ludlow	Shrewsbury	
Calais	Lunenburg	St. Albans	
Cambridge	Maidstone	St. George	
Cavendish	Manchester	Stannard	
Charlotte	Marshfield	Starksboro	
Clarendon	Middlesex	Stockbridge	
Corinth	Middletown	Stowe	
Coventry	Springs	Strafford	
Craftsbury	Milton	Stratton	
Danby	Monkton	Sudbury	
Duxbury	Montpelier	Sunderland	
E. Montpelier	Mount Holly	Sutton	
Eden	Mount Tabor	Tinmouth	
Elmore	New Haven	Townshend	
Essex	Newark	Tunbridge	
Fairfax	Newbury	Underhill	
Fairlee	Newfane	Waitsfield	
Fayston	North Hero	Walden	
Ferrisburgh	Peru	Wallingford	
Fletcher	Pittsfield	Waltham	
Glover	Pittsford	Warren	
Goshen	Plymouth	Washington	
Grafton	Plainfield	Waterbury	

C.3

VCIL 2021 peer survey

Thank you for taking time to let us know about your experience with our organization this past year. **For those of you who return completed surveys by January 31, 2021, you will be entered into a drawing to receive one of three \$100 debit cards.**

If you would prefer to take the survey:

- Over the phone, please call Ericka Reil at 802-224-1816.
- By using ASL please call Laura Siegel, on her videophone, at 802-275-0099.

Satisfaction with VCIL Overall

Please rate your overall experience with VCIL. Select an option that represents your experience from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree for each of the following items.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Staff members are well informed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff members treat me with respect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I receive(d) my services in a timely manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied with my overall experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What has improved in your life as a result of working with VCIL?

If there were things that we could do to better serve you, please let us know your suggestions for improvements: _____

1. What is your single most immediate need due to COVID-19?

2. Are you able to connect with your healthcare providers when you need to?

Yes No Sometimes

If no, why not _____

3. Do you have a working smoke detector in your home? Yes No

4. Do you have a working carbon monoxide detector in your home?

Yes No

5. Receiving legislative updates related to disability rights.

VCIL works with the Vermont Coalition of Disability Rights (VCDR) which sends regular updates out through email.

Yes! Add me to the VCDR email list serve
(enter email on bottom of page)

6. Support and training: VCIL currently offers support groups (online) for people with traumatic brain injury (TBI), and for Deaf and Hard of Hearing peers. I would like to participate in:

TBI support group

Deaf/Hard of Hearing support group

What other skills trainings would you be interested in? _____

7. Becoming a member of VCIL. You will receive a quarterly newsletter, subscription to “The Independent, invites to VCIL events and access to VCIL’s library for free loans of books & movies. I’d like to become a member of VCIL? Yes No

Contact information:

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone: _____

Satisfaction with Meals on Wheels

If you do NOT receive meals, the survey is now complete, please check:

“The Meals on Wheels section does not apply to me.”

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I received my application in a timely manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

VCIL Meals on Wheels staff were helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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VCIL Meals on Wheels staff were easy to reach when I needed help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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How would you rate the quality of the Meals on Wheels meals overall?

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor

Do the meals help you maintain your health? Yes No

On the days that you **do not** eat the Meals on Wheels meal, how many meals do you usually eat? _____

How often do you not have enough to eat?

Occasionally

A few times a month

At least once a week

Never

Do the meals help you to:

Eat healthier foods? Yes No

Achieve or maintain a healthy weight? Yes No

Improve your health? Yes No

Feel better Yes No

Continue to live at home? Yes No

For those meals that are **not** covered by Meals on Wheels, I eat the following (check all that apply):

I eat microwavable meals

I eat sandwiches

I eat take-out food

I eat at community meals

I eat with family/friends

Other:

If VCIL **no** longer provided Meals on Wheels, what would you do?

Get help from family and friends

Move in with family

Move to a nursing home or assisted living facility

Other:

Do the Meals on Wheels help you to increase your independence?

Yes

No

Do you work? Yes No

Do you volunteer? Yes No

Do you participate in community events? Yes No

Other ways MOW has increased your independence? _____

Your comments/recommendations for improvement in the MOW Program: _____

County of Residence _____ Signature (optional) _____

C.4

To empower Vermonters with Disabilities, Deaf Vermonters, and others to tear down the physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers that keep us from realizing our full human potential

VISION:

To be recognized as the place where we join together to celebrate our diversity and the common goal for the full inclusion of all persons in the life of our communities

STRATEGIC PILLARS:

Independent Living	Program Awareness	Financial Sustainability	Organizational Effectiveness	Legislative Advocacy
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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide access to services/equip. that will enable People with Disabilities to remain in their own homes and access their communities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Better define & articulate what VCIL is and does. 2. Develop a PR Campaign. 3. Increase Membership. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diversify & expand revenue sources. 2. Build financial Reserves. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refine program procedures. 2. Continue collaborations and partnerships with other agencies. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess important disability related issues at the local, state, and federal level. 2. Prioritize & Develop strategies for advocacy.
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LONG TERM STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible housing stock is increased • Peers are able to advocate for their needs • Adaptive Equip is readily available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCIL will be recognized as the place to go for help with disability related issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCIL's dependence on state and federal grants will be reduced • Adequate operating reserves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong program offerings with VCIL • No wrong door – peers can enter any agency and get referred to services needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public buildings and events will be accessible to all • The disability voice will be included in laws
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PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #/% increase in # living indep.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % Revenue by source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access
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