

January 2016

We hope everyone had great holidays and got energized for the new year. We have lots of informational and advocacy events listed for January.

With anticipated budget deficits, we will again (*or is it still?*) have to be vigilant and pro-active to preserve the programs and services needed for independent living. Our voices were heard when cuts to The RIDE were on the table. However, these cuts may be proposed again. We need to continue to pay attention, and speak up.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Spooner, Executive Director  
MetroWest Center for Independent Living



Celebrate the  
Americans with  
Disabilities Act

Boston Common July 22, 2015

[www.ADA25Boston.org](http://www.ADA25Boston.org)

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## College Is for Kids with Disabilities

In case you missed it, Representative Sannicandro and Senator L'Italien wrote an exceptional article for the [MetroWest Daily News](#) on the benefits of a college education for people with intellectual disabilities.

..."Massachusetts was first in the country to publicly fund the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative (ICEI): a venture that gives the opportunity for students with intellectual or developmental disabilities to attend our public colleges and universities. Only a few years later, 13 public colleges in Massachusetts now include students with disabilities aged 18 to 22 in mainstream classes with their typically developing peers. The federal government has followed suit, now also issues grants to colleges across the country to open up mainstream college classes to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities."

### Calendar

IL Education Day at  
the State House:

Thursday, March 10  
11 - 2:30

MWCIL

The article describes the increased employment opportunities for kids who attend higher education. *Everyone wins.*

## An Act to Align the Architectural Access Board (AAB) with the ADA Senate Bill 1323

When:

Thursday, January 7, 2016, 11 a.m.

Where:

Grand Staircase of the State House

Join the MA Statewide Independent Living Council Public Information and Education Committee, BCIL, MWCIL and others in reaching out to legislators to galvanize support for Senate Bill 1323 An Act to Align the Architectural Access Board (AAB) with the ADA. We need more supporters, in the



Senate and the House! This legislation will support more access to jobs and increased opportunities for accessible and adaptable housing.

We will meet at 11a.m. at the Grand Staircase of the State House. We will review the legislation and divide into groups to meet with legislators. Please feel free to share this with other people who are interested and invested in this bill. [Download the flyer](#) for more information.

Please RSVP to David Correia at [dcorreia@metrowest.org](mailto:dcorreia@metrowest.org) or 508-875-7853 x117



MetroWest Center  
for Independent  
Living

Website: [www.mwcil.org](http://www.mwcil.org)

Email: [info@mwcil.org](mailto:info@mwcil.org)

Phone: (508)875-7853

Address: 280 Irving  
Street  
Framingham, MA 01702



Facebook:

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)



Disability Advocates Advancing our Healthcare Rights

## Forum on the State's Plans for Accountable Care Organizations

When:

Thursday, January 14  
1-3 pm

Where:

89 South Street  
Boston MA 02111

Contact:

Allegra Stout at 617-338-6665 or  
astout@bostoncil.org

### ***Don't be left out in the cold as health reform unfolds for people with disabilities!***

The state has proposed massive health reform for people on MassHealth, wanting to set up Accountable Care Organizations and Health Homes. They intend to submit a proposal to the federal government by the end of January.

Your health care could improve bigtime-or you could be left out in the cold! Come to the DAAHR Forum and let Dan Tsai, the MassHealth director, know which health care services are important to you.

Will your PCA and homecare services be protected?

Will you have access to your medical specialists?

Will you have control over your mental health services?

Will the plan support people getting out of nursing homes?

Will there be care that is accessible for people with disabilities?

Speak up for healthcare justice for yourself!

Learn more about this event on [FaceBook](#).

## Learning About Housing

When:

Sunday, January 10  
8:30 a.m. - 4:40 p.m.

Where:

Advocates, Inc

1881 Worcester Road  
Framingham

**RSVP required:**

[AHPhousing@comcast.net](mailto:AHPhousing@comcast.net)

(617)893-8217

Limited spots available

Donation:

suggested \$35

**In this workshop families are guided in working through a housing manual that will help them to determine what housing options might be appropriate for their family member.**

## The Alphabet Soup of Resources AFC and PCA

When:

Tuesday, January 12, 7-9 p.m.

Where:

Advocates, Inc.

1881 Worcester Road

Framingham

RSVP:

MFOFC: Lauri Medeiros [rjmede@aol.com](mailto:rjmede@aol.com)

or 617-605-7404

Advocates: Pam McKillop

[PMcKillop@Advocates.org](mailto:PMcKillop@Advocates.org) or 774-279-

7467

This is an interactive discussion about benefits that can support you and your loved one. Speakers will discuss the eligibility requirements and benefits of Adult Family Care (AFC) and Personal Care Assistance (PCA). Baypath Elder Services will review the PCA program and Advocates will provide information about the AFC program and its long-term benefits to individuals and family caregivers.

The workshop is part of the "A Full Life Ahead" series for parents and guardians of young adults with a disability. The series focuses on transition, employment, housing, friendships and other topics that will lead to interdependent, full lives in the community for young adults with disabilities.

The event is by Advocates, MA Families Organizing for change and Riverside Community Care.

[Click Here](#) to link to more event information.

## 2015 Holiday Open House

Thanks to everyone who joined us, and MASILC, for our annual Holiday Open House! See all of the photos from the party at [www.mwcil.org](http://www.mwcil.org).





## Universal Access Program by the Department of Conservation and Recreation

[DCR's Universal Access Program](#) has published the winter newsletter and schedule of events. The newsletter is full of state-wide activities and ideas for outdoor accessible recreation.



Click here for the [access-newsletter.pdf](#).

Click here for the [access-newsletter.docx](#)

Click here for the [access-newsletter.txt](#)

## Mass Health Hearings: Improving the PCA Program

The November 30 Hearing has come and gone, but two more will be held in January. Thanks to DPC for the following information. The sessions are open to all members of the public.

### Overtime and Intra-Day Travel Time for Personal Care Attendants (PCAs)

Purpose: The Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) is hosting three public statewide listening sessions on recent changes to federal regulations implementing the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the MassHealth PCA Program's implementation of these requirements. The purpose of these listening sessions is to gather information from PCA consumers, PCAs, interested stakeholders and the general public on how to improve the PCA program in a way that ensures consumers receive all of their authorized PCA services while minimizing the need for PCAs to work overtime. These listening sessions are an opportunity for MassHealth to obtain input on ways to enhance the health care experience of PCA consumers and to gather ideas on how to make the MassHealth PCA program more sustainable. We welcome all members of the public who wish to share their ideas with

MassHealth and help us work through design challenges related to these recent changes.

Background: The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has issued a Final Rule revising DOL regulations that implement the FLSA. The result of this new rule is that PCAs may receive overtime pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week for one or more consumers cumulatively and pay for intra-day travel time when traveling between one consumer employer's home and another consumer employer's home on the same day to provide PCA services.

What MassHealth is Doing: Beginning on January 1, 2016, PCAs will automatically receive overtime pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week for one or more consumers combined and pay for intra-day travel time in which a PCA travels between one consumer employer's home and another consumer employer's home on the same day to provide PCA services. To facilitate this, MassHealth's contracted fiscal intermediaries will track the cumulative hours worked by PCAs each week, even if they work for more than one consumer, and will automatically calculate any intra-day travel time.

Prior to January 1, 2016, if a consumer needs to schedule a PCA to work more than 40 hours per week, the consumer must contact his/her designated personal care management agency to make a request for prior authorization for premium pay for overtime, as described under MassHealth PCA regulations at 130 CMR 422.420(A)(13).

**When:**

Friday, January 22, 2016  
1:00 - 3:00 P.M.

**Where:**

Saxe Meeting Room  
Worcester Public Library  
3 Salem Square  
Worcester, MA 01608

**Call in Information:**

877-929-7125

**Participant code:**

3608246

**When:**

Wednesday, January 27, 2016  
1:00 - 3:00 P.M.

**Where:**



Community Room  
Mason Square Branch  
Springfield Public Library  
765 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01109

Call In Information:  
866-565-6580

Participant code:  
95934

Disability-Related Accommodations:  
Communication Access Real-time Translation  
(CART) services and ASL Interpretation will be  
available. If disability-related accommodations are  
required for you to attend, or you need materials in  
other formats, please  
contact: [Erin.Dore@state.ma.us](mailto:Erin.Dore@state.ma.us).

**Comments:** Can be sent  
to: [Erin.Dore@state.ma.us](mailto:Erin.Dore@state.ma.us).

## Blackstone Valley area officials push for opioid Navigator

"MILFORD - December 27, 2015 - An area  
addiction specialist is pushing for a new way to  
combat the growing problem of opiate addiction in  
the region. It's called substance abuse navigation,  
and it's about building a network of specialists that  
helps addicts find help to shake the powerful, and  
often fatal, hold that heroin and other opiates can  
have.

That specialist is Amy Leone, a Hopedale resident  
who runs the Milford nonprofit therapy center  
Community Impact, and organizes several area  
coalitions aimed at helping addicts.

The vision is a staff of five addiction specialists  
who service the Milford and Franklin area 24/7.  
The specialists work as a link between addicts,  
their families, local police departments, and both  
inpatient and outpatient treatment services."

Read the whole article in the [Worcester Telegram](#).

Survey: Wheelchair Repair in  
Massachusetts

Wheelchair repair has been an issue for years. Someone is conducting a survey. You can [participate by clicking here](#).

## Snow Situations

Did you know that businesses and municipalities must keep handicapped and van accessible parking spots, along with curb cuts and ramps, clear of snow? If you find any non-compliant snow barriers, please contact MWCIL, and let us know the locations.



## VOTE!

The Presidential Primary will be on Tuesday, March 1, 2016. *You must be registered, and have your desired party enrollment by Wednesday, February 10 in order to vote in the primary. Unenrolled, registered voters may vote either a Democratic or Republican ballot.*

If you've been following the presidential campaign, you know that the stakes are very high in the 2016 presidential election. Since the Citizens United Supreme Court ruling, money in elections is basically uncontrolled, and it can be very difficult to decipher what is true from the constant, slick advertising. Our state legislators are elected every two years (2016), and their opponents can (and do!) get money from anywhere in the country. Our Congressmen and women will also be running in 2016. Again, the stakes in Washington are high - especially for disability issues. While we focus on issues, everything is easier when the right (i.e. supportive of disability issues) people are in office!

In preparation for 2016 elections, the Disability Law Center, IL Centers and other disability organizations are partnering to ensure that that all voters with disabilities can vote by increasing registration, education and access. Stay tuned for more information from REV Up.

Bill Galvin, The Secretary of State, has enhanced the [Elections Division on the state website](#). With more information, on-line registration, insistence on accessible polling venues, early voting (new for November 2016) and absentee ballots, *Massachusetts residents have no excuse for not participating!* Here are some of my favorite links:

- [Find my Elected Officials](#)
- [Register to Vote ONLINE](#). Online registration requires a RMV ID. If you do not have an RMV ID, you can fill out the form, print it, and mail it in.
- [Voting for Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [Absentee Voting](#)
- and... last but not least, [How to Run for President](#)

Please contact us at MWCIL if you have questions or need help registering or voting.

[www.mwcil.org](http://www.mwcil.org)

MetroWest Center for Independent Living  
280 Irving Street  
Framingham, Massachusetts 01702  
(508) 875-7853

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