

An aerial photograph of the Chicago skyline, showing numerous skyscrapers and buildings. The city extends to the edge of Lake Michigan, which is visible on the left side of the image. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall lighting suggests a bright, slightly overcast day.

Housing Navigation

Miranda Martinicky
Housing Navigator

Community Alternatives Unlimited

Region B: Service area: Chicago, North/Northwest sides from 400 North to City Limits;
North and Northwest Suburban Cook County, and Lake County

What is Housing Navigation?

- ▶ 2 Year Pilot program launched by the Illinois Department of Human Services in partnership with the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities
- ▶ Goal: To assist individuals in finding safe, accessible locations to rent independently in the community.
- ▶ The primary activities of the Individual Service Coordinator (ISC) Housing Navigator are to assess and work with individuals to identify housing preferences, needs, and desires.
- ▶ Navigators also work to cultivate and maintain landlord and affordable housing relationships across various communities to facilitate making matches between independent housing options and people with Developmental Disabilities (DD) who have expressed a desire for independent supported/ affordable housing.
- ▶ Available to individuals who currently receive services through the Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver or have been recently selected through the Illinois Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS).
 - ▶ This includes individuals who may want to live alone or with others of their choice!
 - ▶ Both DD waiver programs are eligible: Adult Home-Based Support (AHBS) or Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA)

Housing Navigator Duties

- ▶ **Assessment:** Your Housing Navigator will work with you to identify housing preferences, needs, and desires.
- ▶ **Financial:** The Housing Navigator will explore opportunities within a desired budget to make community living more affordable.
- ▶ **Housing Linkage:** Your Housing Navigator has access to enroll individuals on the Statewide Referral Network, remains informed of Public Housing waitlist opportunities, and continues to form relationships with outside partners.
- ▶ **The Right Fit:** Once a location is identified that meets the known areas of importance, the Housing Navigator will assist with the touring, application, and moving process as needed.

A Collaborative Mission



Your Housing Navigator will remain in contact with your Individual Service Coordinator (ISC) throughout transition.



Your ISC will work with you to ensure that services and supports needed are in place for a seamless transition.



Once transition is completed, your identified ISC will continue to visit and assess satisfaction in relation to your home.



The Housing Navigator can always reinitiate support to assist in finding a new location.

How Individuals can enroll in Housing Navigation

- ▶ Call or email your Independent Service Coordination (ISC) agency
- ▶ Ask for Housing Navigation
- ▶ Put independent living in your Discovery and Personal Plan

FAQ



I'm interested, but not quite ready to move yet!

If you are looking to move in the next 2 years, you can still start contacting your Housing Navigator! This will help with the assessment process and let your contact know for future planning and general consultation.



What if I want to move to a location that is not in my service area?

Your Housing Navigator can assist with finding affordable locations throughout the State of Illinois. Please consult your Housing Navigator for more information.



What if my income is too high to qualify for the Statewide Referral Network?

No problem! Your housing Navigator can help you explore opportunities within your budget outside of subsidized housing resources.



Is this opportunity available if a family is seeking housing support?

Possibly! The Housing Navigator can assist with rental opportunities only; this service is not available to those who are looking into purchasing a home.

* At this time, the program does not provide rent or purchase assistance. Please note, the Medicaid waivers cannot pay for housing.



Are any additional funds available?

Transition funds are available on an as needed basis; please consult your Housing Navigator for more information.

FAQ

How will an individual with a disability that is living in a separate apartment in a regular building be supported? Don't they need staff on site?

- ▶ People receiving Housing Navigation assistance will also be matched with a DD Services provider for on-going support including service visits at the home/apartment. In most cases, those staff will not be on site all day every day.
- ▶ Some property owners may provide small office space for services staff to help their time on site. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be purely voluntary.
- ▶ If someone needs a live-in staff, this can be accommodated through the housing referral process, where the staff is a co-tenant in the housing unit. In this case an increase the unit size (i.e. from a one-bedroom to a two-bedroom) can be requested.

Is there an ongoing database that has properties posted if there are openings at a location?

- ▶ There is no database that tracks unit vacancies across properties that is open to the public or to Housing Navigators. The SRN is a database that tracks vacancies and properties and sends requests to the state-run referral system for eligible applicants.

Can the Housing Navigator Pilot Program be used for a small group (2-3) individuals who have been pulled from PUNS and want a 24-hour CILA?

- ▶ The Housing Navigator Program promotes independent housing options where tenants with DD have a lease and a separation of their housing setting (landlord) and their DD services provider. Individuals may choose to live together and jointly lease an apartment and then have services provided by the same or separate services provider. This includes people who need 24-hour services.
- ▶ A provider controlled 24-hour CILA setting within an apartment building where housing and services are bundled under a rate, and where service providers manage who moves in and out is not a housing option coordinated through the Housing Navigator Program.

FAQ

Does the SRN match with housing that is within the budget for individuals or consider the limited income? (i.e. Section 8)

- ▶ The units in the SRN are affordable to persons who are at or below the 30% of Area Median Income, based on the household size. Some, but not all, SRN units come with additional rental assistance to further reduce the rent.
- ▶ SRN is not the same as Section 8. Section 8, also called Project-Based or Housing Choice Vouchers, are managed by Public Housing Authorities.

Who can receive support from the Housing Navigator Program?

- ▶ The Housing Navigator Program will support people who are assigned services for Intellectual and Developmental Disability Services (I/DD) through the State of Illinois Medicaid Waiver program. This includes people who are newly Selected from PUNS or who are already receiving services. Housing Navigator supports include identifying available housing units, assisting with housing search and applications, coordinating with Independent Service Coordination (ISC) case management and DD Services Providers for ongoing support, and providing access to Housing Transition Funds.

If someone is on the PUNS list and wants to get on the Statewide Referral Network (SRN) can an ISC do that for the person or the family and at what age do you suggest one get registered on the SRN?

- ▶ People with I/DD and families should consider the level of natural support needed to feel stable in housing. The SRN is open to adding people without Medicaid-funded services, however the ISC Housing Navigation Pilot is not focusing on pre-PUNS or PUNS Waiting List. The SRN is only accessed by trained and authorized staff and is not open to the public. People not yet in waiver services will be alerted when there are opportunities to support PAIR enrollment

FAQ

To address the concern about the need for staff on site, will funds be provided for remote support and access to a 24 hours provider back up person?

- ▶ Depending on the types of services that a person chooses to receive, there are opportunities to use funds for remote supports and other assistive technology devices.
- ▶ Here is the DDD information bulletin about IDHS Remote Support: <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=136477>
- ▶ Here is the information bulletin about IDHS Adaptive Equipment, Assistive Technology, Home and Vehicle Modification Request Process: <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=121677>
- ▶ Housing Navigators facilitate access to an appropriate living situation in the community. The ISC/ ISSA Case Manager works to secure a DD services provider that will provide ongoing supportive services once in housing. Those services may include on-site visits, phone and virtual calls, and provision of other care/support that is a part of the overall services package.
- ▶ Apartment buildings typically have onsite property management and custodial staff to care for the building if issues arise with the physical property. Property Management can be informed of who to contact if the provider is not on-site but the individual needs assistance.
- ▶ It will be important for the individual, family, service providers and ISC to document the assistive technology or other supports that will promote safety, security, and comfort when living in an apartment and in between visits. People with disabilities can live successfully in independent housing with the right supports and services.



In Conclusion

We at CAU are excited to be an active participant in this pilot, and to help drive the emerging policies and procedures that continue to be developed, as we learn from assisting individuals to attain independent supportive housing in the community.

Please be aware that the information shared today may change and be updated as our experience grows. Always feel free to reach out if you have questions.

Thank you so much for participating today!



For more information,
please contact the Housing
Navigator at your local ISC
Agency

Miranda Martinicky

Housing Navigator

Community Alternatives Unlimited

mmartinicky@cau.org

(773)867-4007



In partnership with the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities. This product is supported in part by grant number CFDA 93.630 from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects with government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official ACL policy.

