

## Get Help From CAP

**Any applicant, client, family member or service provider** may contact CAP to ask questions or raise concerns about a specific experience with VR or IL. CAP will inform you of your rights and responsibilities, discuss how the VR or IL system can work best for you, and offer guidance specific to your experience. We cannot discuss the applicant/client without written consent from the applicant/client.

If the applicant/client requests intervention, an **Authorization to Release Information** must be signed. Upon receipt of a Release, CAP will do one or all of the following:

- ◇ Contact the person(s) with knowledge of the matter
- ◇ Request the service plan (Individualized Plan for Employment or Independent Living Plan) and any amendments
- ◇ Review case notes, if any
- ◇ Review other relevant documents.

If the review reveals concerns, CAP may advocate on your behalf with the VR or IL agency by:

- ◇ Resolving the matter informally,
- ◇ Representing you at an Administrative Review, Fair Hearing, and (in rare cases) Court and/or
- ◇ Referring you to other services or resources.

## Resources

### Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

[www.mass.gov/mrc](http://www.mass.gov/mrc)

(617) 204-3600

(800) 245-6543

[MRC.generalinformation@Massmail.State.MA.US](mailto:MRC.generalinformation@Massmail.State.MA.US)

### Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

[www.mass.gov/mcb](http://www.mass.gov/mcb)

(617) 727-5550

(800) 392-6450

[MCBInfo@state.ma.us](mailto:MCBInfo@state.ma.us)

### Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council

[www.masilc.org/findacenter](http://www.masilc.org/findacenter)

(508) 620-7452



[bit.ly/2PxLXWq](https://bit.ly/2PxLXWq)



Mass.gov [www.mass.gov/mod](http://www.mass.gov/mod)



[@MassDisability](https://twitter.com/MassDisability)



[blog.mass.gov/mod](http://blog.mass.gov/mod)



## Client Assistance Program (CAP)

One Ashburton Place, Room 1305  
Boston, MA 02108

(617)-727-7440

(800)-322-2020

For TTY users call Mass Relay at 711  
or (800)-439-0183

[www.mass.gov/mod/cap](http://www.mass.gov/mod/cap)

Charles D. Baker, Governor  
Karyn E. Polito, Lt. Governor  
Mary Mahon McCauley, Exec. Director

## The Client Assistance Program

The **Client Assistance Program (CAP)** operates under a federal grant from the Rehabilitation Services Administration. CAP provides information and advocacy to people with disabilities who seek and receive vocational rehabilitation (VR) services from the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) and/or the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), as well as those who seek and receive independent living (IL) services from Independent Living Centers. CAP discusses how VR and IL services can best work for individuals, informs applicants and consumers about their rights and responsibilities under state and federal regulations, and assists individuals with receiving the VR and IL services for which they are eligible through advocacy and appeal representation.

### Privacy and Independence

**CAP services are free and strictly confidential.** We will not discuss anything about you without your written consent.

CAP is independent of the agencies that provide vocational rehabilitation and independent living services. To preserve its independence, CAP is housed at Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD), a state agency that “works to ensure the full and equal participation of all people with disabilities in all aspects of life in a manner that fosters dignity and self-determination.”

## Vocational Rehabilitation

**Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)** services help jobseekers with disabilities prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment. The VR employment goal in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) must be consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interest, and informed choice.

VR services through MRC or MCB may include, among other services, career counseling and guidance; job development, placement and follow-up; adaptive technology or equipment assessment and/or provision; and education about reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Also, VR may provide funding for education or training and other services necessary for an individual to reach and maintain a specific employment goal.

### Pre-ETS

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act requires that MRC and MCB offer **Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)** to students with disabilities starting at age 14 until their 22nd birthday. The aim of Pre-ETS is to create awareness of and prepare students for work and postsecondary education through services across five areas:

- ◇ Job exploration counseling
- ◇ Work readiness training
- ◇ Work-based learning experiences
- ◇ Counseling in postsecondary education
- ◇ Self-advocacy and mentoring services.

## Independent Living

**Independent Living Centers (ILCs)** were established by people with disabilities seeking full integration into society. Acknowledging that people with disabilities are the best sources of information about their personal goals and needs, ILCs provide five core consumer-driven services:

- ◇ Independent Living Skills Training
- ◇ Peer Support
- ◇ Advocacy
- ◇ Transition
- ◇ Information and Referral.

ILCs teach consumers with a wide range of disabilities the self-confidence and practical skills that empower consumers to make choices that promote their right to live independently in the community.

### Your Voice Matters

*“Independent Living does not mean that we want to do everything by ourselves and do not need anybody or that we want to live in isolation. Independent Living means that we demand the same choices and control in our every-day lives that our non-disabled brothers and sisters, neighbors and friends take for granted. ... Since we are the best experts on our needs, we need to show the solutions we want, need to be in charge of our lives, think and speak for ourselves - just as everybody else.”* – **Adolf Ratzka, 2003, Independent Living Institute**