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 >> Hello. My name is Chris Rodriguez and the director of the resource center. I would like to welcome you to the second week of our able to say. This week we are concentrating on what is the criteria to being eligible to open up a ABLE Account. And how do you contribute funds. How might they affect your eligibility for federal benefits? Before we get started, as always let’s take care of housekeeping items. The audio is being broadcast through your computer. Please make sure your speakers are turned on or your headphones are plugged in. You can control the broadcast via the broadcast panel. If you accidentally close the panel you can reopen it by going to the communicate menu at the top of the screen and choosing join audio broadcasts.

If you do not have sound capabilities, or you would like to listen by phone instead, the dial-in information is on the right hand of your screen and was included in the webinar registration. Real-time captioning is provided during the webinar. They can be found in the media viewer panel which appears in the lower right-hand corner of the webinar platform. If you want to make the panel larger you can minimize other panels such as the chat, Q&A, and or the participants panel.

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During the webinar if you experience technical difficulties use the chat box to send a host NDI admin. You may also email the address you see there on the screen. >> I am excited to host another very informative webinar. This is part of our hashtag able to say. I am Chris Rodriguez and addition we have Jim Sheldon was the supervising attorney at the national assistive technology advocacy project as well as Marlene Ulisky who is the Social Security benefits expert here at the national disability X - - Institute.

On the agenda we have a lot to cover. We will talk about the resource center and we will give you more information about the hashtag ABLE to save campaign. We will do a couple of slides on the basics and we will provide examples of folks who may be eligible and those who may not. Then we will handle it to Jim to see how exactly funds may affect an individual's eligibility for benefits such as SSI and others. He will guide us through a profile example of an individual who is ABLE eligible and how it helps them increase their health, independence, and quality of life. If we get through that quickly, we will have time for questions and answers.

Very quickly let's talk about the ABLE National Resource Center. It's a collaborative whose supporters share the goal of accelerating the design and availability of ABLE accounts for the benefit of individuals with disabilities and their families. We bring together the investment, support, and resources of the country's largest and most influential national disability organization. If you wonder about anything I encourage you to visit our website at www.ablenrc.org we have an incredible amount of information on there. Including the archived webinars and fact sheets and a comparison chart on each program and much more. Please check that when you get a chance.

I said previously we are in week two of the #ABLEtoSaveCampaign public awareness campaign. It’s a month-long marketing and informational campaign taking place throughout the entire month of August. It is spearheaded by the ABLE National Resource Center and in collaboration with the 25+ national disability organizational members, state programs, financial institutions and other ABLE related stakeholders. The #ABLEtoSaveCampaign will strive to blanket the country with information regarding all things related to ABLE with the specific aim to accelerate - - accelerate the opening of accounts for people with disabilities and their families.

Again the primary goal of the campaign is to vastly increase awareness and education about ABLE accounts and to accelerate the opening of these ABLE accounts both in the short-term and long-term, so millions of people that are eligible to open them up can realize the transformative benefits associated with being an ABLE account owner.

This campaign takes place throughout the entire month of August. It is broken down into four individual weeks of education, information, and marketing. Each week focuses on a different aspect of ABLE with the aim of providing potential ABLE account owners with comprehensive education and motivation so they can become comfortable enrolling in ABLE programs of their choice. Week one was last week. We talked about basic overview of ABLE. The history of the ABLE Act and basic accounts of ABLE. We had great guests who have been involved with ABLE from the start. That webinar is up on the site in case you missed it. This week we’re talking about not only eligibility but how those funds interact with public benefits. Next week will concentrate on how - - what exactly the funds that are contributed into a ABLE Account can be spent on. We will talk about what is a qualified disability expense. The last week which I am most excited about, we will walk through what enrollment looks like. We will talk about an incredible new tool that will be unveiled at the end of the campaign that helps people who have already signed up for the ABLE Account. It helps them understand how to understand their ABLE Account and maximize the benefits associated with that. This campaign is national in scale and will utilize a diverse set of tools in order to maximize our reach. The tools include, but are not limited to, the social media, national webinars, short videos, twitter chats, town halls, email blasts, and the utilization of the website. I encourage you to follow us on social media. If you are not already getting the ABLE email blast and the newsletter you can sign up for that. And then check in periodically on the website because we are unveiling different tools throughout the month.

Just quickly will talk about ABLE basic so everyone has a grounding or foundational knowledge during this webinar.

As you may have learned in the last webinar, the ABLE Act is actually the Stephen Beck, Jr. it’s - - achieving a better life experience actor it amends the tax code to add a section called 529A. What that allows is for people to create a new option, but they have to be eligible and allows them to save money in a tax-exempt account that may be used for qualified disability related expenses while still keeping the eligibility for federal public benefit. Today we will talk about two parts of that. The first one, eligible people with disabilities and the last one, keeping the eligibility for federal public benefits. Those are the two that we will focus on today.

Again basic characteristic. There are eligibility requirements related to opening an ABLE Account that speak to the age in which they first experienced the disability and related to the severity of it. That is one of the bigger sections we will talk about. We will dive into that here in a few slides. Additionally, an eligible individual is not obligated to enroll in their state of residence. As long as you are eligible and you meet those criteria we will discuss today, despite whether or not your state has an ABLE program, you are still allowed to enroll in another states ABLE program, provided they allow out-of-state residents of which many of the ABLE programs do. The designated beneficiary is the account owner. That is a really important characteristic of these ABLE accounts. We created this so the person with a disability has as much financial independence and autonomy as possible in terms of the funds in their account. That being said, if the person does not have the capacity to oversee their account or would like someone else to do it on their behalf, there are three types of individuals that can do that for them. The first is the parent if the individual is a minor. An individual with guardianship over that beneficiary or a person who was given power of attorney by the beneficiary. All three of those people could have what's called signature authority or basically be able to exercise authority over the account on behalf of the person with the disability. Funds cannot just be used for anything. They are meant to be used for what’s called qualified disability related expenses. I am sure you are wondering what that means. I encourage you to come back this time next week and we will talk about what it means. Additionally, assets in and distributions for qualified disability related expenses will be disregarded or given special treatment when determining eligibility for most federal means tested benefits including Social Security and Medicaid. And the second half of this webinar digs down into exactly how the funds in those accounts interact with those means tested benefits. I think that is what makes ABLE very special in addition to a lot of other great benefit.

Anyone can contribute to a person’s ABLE Account. In addition to the beneficiary or the person with a disability perhaps as a result of inheritance or employment, they can contribute into their own ABLE Account. In general, there is a $15,000 annual contribution limit. That is from all contributors combined that cannot exceed a total contribution of $15,000 per tax year. Once that tax year finishes, then it starts over and you can build on that maximized $15,000 and continue to grow.

That will give everyone some ABLE basics so we have a foundation to grow on as we talk about the main purposes of this webinar. We want to start out with eligibility. Who is eligible to open up this account? Eligibility is broken down into what I like to call two different prongs. Both of which need to be satisfied before an individual can be deemed eligible to open up an ABLE Account. Unfortunately, not all people with disabilities can open up an account. Let's take a look at what this requires. There is an age requirement. It states the individual must have become disabled prior to their 26th birthday. That means the person who wants - - was trying to open up an ABLE Account they must have had an onset or experienced their disability before the 26th birthday. But doesn't mean you can't be 36, 37, 40, 45 and open up an ABLE Account. What it means is your disability must have started before age 26. Let's assume you check that box off. Your disability did in fact have an onset prior to your 26th birthday. You also have to meet a requirement that speak to the severity of that disability. There are a couple ways you can satisfy that. The first is if the individual has been determined and is currently receiving supplemental security income, or Social Security disability benefit. If you are currently a beneficiary of SSI or SSDI or they are - - as they are more commonly known. Also if your disability was acquired before age 26, you’re good to go. You can move forward and start looking at all of the different ABLE programs you may be eligible for. Let's say you meet the age requirement but for whatever reason you are not receiving SSI or SSD are benefits. Perhaps you applied but you haven't been awarded them. Perhaps you have employment as a result of how much money you make. Despite of having a disability you are not eligible because of some requirements within SSI. You still want to save for your future. There is another thing you can do. You can SMIT what’s called a disability certification assuring you hold documentation of a physician’s diagnosis and signature and confirming you meet the functional disability criteria

 in the ABLE Act. That is related to the severity of the disability described in the Social Security act. We will break that down and tell you how that affects you.

First let’s talk and I want to make sure people understand this first prong. The age of onset. The requirement states in order to be eligible to open up an ABLE Account the individual must have a Kurd - - the disability must have occurred before the date on which the individual attained the age of 26. That does not mean you have to be under the age of 26 to open an account. This does not mean the individual necessarily had to have a formal diagnosis related to their disability prior to the 26th birthday. It means that they had to have had an onset or they have had to have begun to experience the disability before their 26th birthday. Remember that the age of onset requirement is just one of two requirements that must be met.

 The second and let's dig down into the severity related to the disability. This is the second prong in addition to the age related requirement. In addition to that, the individual must meet additional criteria related to the severity of their disability in order to be determined eligible to open up an able account. You can secure this or satisfy this in one of two ways. First if you are currently receiving SSI or SSDI. You have to currently be receiving it. It's not a situation in which I had it once but I don’t have it anymore so I am eligible, or I am in a determination process. I applied for it but I didn't get it. You have to currently be receiving it. This is in addition to the age and you can do that. Then you can open up an able account in the program of your choosing. That is not the only way to satisfy the second prong. If you are not currently receiving SSI or SSDI and your disability occurred prior to your 26th birthday, you can submit a disability certification. That is to the satisfaction of the Sec. of the U.S. treasury. We will talk about what that looks like on the next slide. This can be tricky. If an individual with a disability is not currently a beneficiary of SSI or SSDI, depending on the severity of the disability they may still be eligible to open the account. Through establishing a disability certification. What is this? Let's talk about that.

In the law, this is what it states, a disability certification with respect to an individual is a certification signed under penalty of perjury by the individual, or the individual with the disability or a person with signature authority, that the ABLE Account owner for that individual has a medically determinable, physical, or mental impairment that results in marked and severe functional limitation, and that they can be expected to have it result in death or has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months. Or if they are applied within the definition of blindness in the so security act. That definition or term medically determined physical or mental impairment that results in marked impairment. They have to sign off saying your disability does meet that language there. That description of severity. It also means the blindness or disability again occurred before the date on which the individual became 26 years old or for this purpose an individual is deemed to attain his or her 26th birthday. That will always be paired with it. This is a two-pronged requirement or eligibility system. That will include the copy of the individual’s diagnosis related to their relative impairment or impairment signed by a physician. The physician is defined as an M.D. or D.O. When you are in a circumstance where you try to get disability certification and you need a physician to sign off for it has to be that they are a licensed physician with an M.D. or D.O. I've gotten questions from people that says I have a mental impairment and my therapist knows that it resulted before the age of 26 and we confirmed it meets the requirement. They do not have an D or M.D., that person would not have the authority to sign off on that document. That is something important to remember.

Additional

 - - additionally there is something called the list of compassionate allowances condition. They are at the lake in front of you. This is a list of conditions the Social Security administration has come up with and if you do fall under this and of course again, that impairment or condition began before age 26, you would be good to go. He would nod - - need to sign under penalty of perjury that you have that diagnosis and you have seen a physician. That is important to know. In most circumstances the disability certification will not - - you will not need to be filed with the program prior to or during the establishment of the ABLE Account. You don't have to submit this to the state ABLE program or the IRS. You will likely have to sign under penalty of perjury that it does exist. You need to have a. You would be required to submit this document if the state ABLE program or the IRS requests it. You need to make sure you have it. You don't - - you probably won’t necessarily be asked to submit it when you enroll, but you need to have it in your records. It does need to exist.

Additional eligibility information. Whether an individual is eligible is determined for each taxable year, and that determination applies for the entire year. However, a qualified able program may choose different methods of assuring a designated beneficiary's status as an eligible individual, and may impose different periodic recertification requirements for different types of impairments. What the law says is if I become certified for the purpose of an ABLE Account in February, I am good for the rest of the year. I may be asked to recertify on an annual basis, however the ABLE program has the authority, depending on the particular disability or condition, to impose different recertification requirements.

Additionally, no inference may be drawn from a disability certification for purposes of establishing SSI or SSDI. Let’s say that

 I am not receiving SSI or SSDI and I am applying for an ABLE Account. I went to my doctor and showed him the definition we talked about. The doctor signs off yes. I can open my ABLE Account but it doesn’t mean I can take that and assume that I am now eligible for SSI or SSDI. Just because you can open up an ABLE Account of his - - as a result of being the beneficiary does not mean you can receive that as a result of being able to open up an able account. It works one way but not the other.

I get the question and this gets in the weeds but it's kind of what this webinar is about. What happens if I lose ABLE Account eligibility? That is a great question. We have a specific answer here. It states that if the account owner ceases to be an eligible individual, then for each taxable year in which the designated beneficiary is not an eligible individual the account will continue to be an ABLE Account. The designated beneficiary will continue to be that designated beneficiary and the ABLE Account will not have deemed to have been distributed. However, beginning on the first day of the designated beneficiaries first taxable year for which they are no longer an eligible individual, additional contributions to the designated beneficiaries account must not be accepted by the qualified ABLE program. No amounts incurred during that year and each subsequent year in which the designated beneficiary does not satisfy the definition of being an eligible individual will be considered an eligible disability expense. We took that directly from the rules and regulations. What that basically means is, if for whatever reason you no longer meet that definition. Let's say your disability is episodic. It can come and go in terms of severity. Or something of that nature. If you are eligible in February, you would still be eligible for the rest of the year. As soon as that next tax day comes basically the account freezes. You can no longer make any contributions into the account and you can no longer take any money out of it that would be considered a qualified disability expense. The fun sitting there are frozen they are still not taken into consideration when determining eligibility. Until such time as if you have a situation where you fall back into a circumstance where you are considered to be helpful, then of course the account would be unfrozen.

If the beneficiary becomes ineligible, contributions to the beneficiaries ABLE Account again may be accepted subject to the contribution limits

under 529A which is $15,000 per tax year that we talked about. Expenses incurred that meet the definition of qualified disability expenses will be qualified. That is a bunch of language saying the account will be unfrozen. We had a lot of questions about that so I am glad we had the opportunity to address it specifically.

We want to talk briefly about pending eligibility legislation. We often get the question about what is up with the 26 number? Why do you have to first experience the disability prior to age 26 quest what does that have to do with anything? The answer is that it was never part of the original ABLE Act. The ABLE Act took nearly a decade to get through the legislative process. As it made its way through the process towards the very end of it, for reasons of policy and politics it relates to how much the bill would have cost once it was past it was too great. We needed the cost of the piece of legislation. In order to do this, Congress decided to add that in and we decided to ratchet that backup. As your night both know just because they got the disability at 25 or 27, there needs can be just as great. We are working very hard to pass an ABLE age adjustment act. It is pending in both the house and senate and it increases the age of the onset of eligibility from 26 to 46. That would increase the number of individuals with disabilities I think by the millions. We estimate it would increase about 6 million additional people and they would be able to open up the account and would not have to put into jeopardy the eligibility for benefits. This adjustment would have no effect on that second prong that talks about the severity of the disability. It is pending in the House and Senate. We encourage you to reach out to your members of Congress and asked them to consider cosponsoring that bill and supporting the legislation on the Senate side. It is referred to as Senate Bill 817. On the house it's referred to as HR 1874. It has bipartisan support meeting there are both Republicans and Democrats that supported pick we need to get as many members of Congress to support it so we can encourage to pass this and encourage many more individuals to be able to open up these accounts.

I will talk about benefits briefly because Jim will get into the depths of it here. Basically they are meant to supplement [Indiscernible] the Medicaid program and the supplemental security income program, the beneficiary's employment and other sources. What this means is, all the funds contributing from friends and family and the beneficiary themselves, those are not supposed to be taken into consideration when determining that individual’s eligibility for things like Medicaid. Someone who needs supports and services, the Medicaid office can’t say you have $50,000 in your ABLE Account so we will not allow you supports and services provided through Medicaid. It’s not allowed. Nor is it allowed for them to say since you have $50,000 in that account, we will lower your hours of this particular service. That is not allowed. Congress explicitly said the funds in the ABLE Account are meant to supplement, not supplant benefits provided through other sources. That is what makes it so special. Again they are not taken into consideration when determining eligibility for benefits. There is one exception and we will talk about that too on the next slide. That relates to individuals who are ABLE Account owners who are also receiving SSI or Supplemental Security Income. Not all ABLE Account owners will be on SSI. Many will be. What the law states is that only the first $100,000 in an ABLE Account is disregarded. Basically when you're ABLE Account exceeds $100,000, your SSI cash benefit will be temporarily suspended until such time as that ABLE Account falls back below $100,000. That is what that states. The ABLE programs have only been around for a couple years. We know there are those caps in terms of how much money can be contributed. No one has come close to that $100,000 yet. We are working with the programs to make sure they will alert ABLE Account owners as the accounts approach the balances just in case the individual is receiving SSI and may need to make some type of decision whether they want to spend the money on a disability related expense to bring the balance down or they have the option of putting it into a non-interest-bearing account so it doesn't grow, or whether to plow on through that cap and suspend the monthly cash benefit. There are a lot of things to think about. It is not something relevant right now because again no one has gotten to that point but it is important to know.

In addition to that even if a lot of people are qualified and eligible for Medicaid as a result of the eligibility for Parasite important to know that even if that $100,000 cap is exceeded and the cash Bennett related to SSI suspended, your Medicaid remains intact. It does not go anywhere. It is only that SSI cash benefit which is the only benefit that by law may be suspended as a result. Only if it goes over $100,000.

Lastly I want to talk about the Medicaid payback provision. This is very important to understand. This states that any assets remaining in an ABLE Account when a beneficiary pass away can be used to reimburse a state Medicaid office for payments made on behalf of that beneficiary starting at the point in which the person first established they are ABLE Account. This means - -, first if you have an ABLE Account and are not receiving Medicaid services and never received it while having the ABLE Account, don’t worry about this provision whatsoever. If you are receiving Medicaid and I know many do, you might want to understand this because as you receive these supports and services, the state which is providing you with those services is keeping track of how much money they are spending on them. Then when you pass away they will add up all of the costs related to the benefits that they provided you, during the time that you had the ABLE Account. They can take that and file a claim with your program saying they want to be reimbursed for that to the extent in which you have funds in that ABLE Account. We always refer to ABLE as a great tool for getting around asset limits and saving for your future without having put into jeopardy supports and services, but perhaps not the best wealth transfer tool. It's also worth noting, that some states have eliminated this Medicaid payback provision. It's important to get a hold of your state to see if they are one of those states.

Let's talk quickly because I want to make sure Jim has time. Just some examples of ABLE eligibility. Let's talk about Jack. He's 43 years old and he has a diagnosis of Lou Gehrig’s disease. He is currently a beneficiary of SSDI. He first began to experience his symptoms of ALS when he was 34. Is he eligible? Unfortunately, he is not. Why? It states clearly that he first experienced or had an onset of the disability after his 26th birthday. That is unfortunate because we know Jack would probably appreciate the benefits related to ABLE. It is noted that if the able age adjustment act is passed he could open up an ABLE Account. That just highlights the age provision that unfortunately can prohibit people with disabilities from being able to save in an ABLE Account. Let's talk about Mary. She is eight years old and currently a beneficiary of SSI. She eligible? Yes. She has down syndrome she was born with a disability so clearly she experienced it prior to her 26 birthday. She is on SSI. She is good to go.

Let's talk about John. John is 22. John has been diagnosed with cerebral palsy. His impairments related to his DP have been recognized since birth. John has a great job of which the amount his income disqualifies him from SSI. John has a disability certification. Is he eligible to open up an ABLE Account? Yes, he is. Because his cerebral palsy caused Mark and severe functional limitations. He has been certified by a qualified physician. It occurred prior to his 26 birthday. He meets the age of onset and severity of disability requirement in the statute. He is eligible to open up an ABLE Account.

 Let's talk about Sally and Sue. They are identical twins. They have the same medical history up until the accident and neither had a disability prior to that. Unfortunately Sally and Sue were in two separate car accident. Sally was paralyzed in a car accident a day before her 26 birthday. Sue was paralyzed in a car accident a day following her 26th birthday. They both have disability certification signed by Dr. stating how their paralysis caused Mark and severe functional limitation. However, since Sally had the disability prior to her 26 birthday she would be eligible to open up account. Since Sue’s disability occurred after her 26 birthday, she would not be eligible to open up an account. Despite the fact that they have exactly the same situation a few days off. Again, this shows that despite having the same severity related to the disability, one can and one cannot open up an ABLE Account. That is unfortunate.

Let's talk about Anna. She does not have a disability likes the idea of having an ABLE Account because her friend has one. She eligible? Of course not. You have to have a disability in order to be eligible to open up an ABLE Account. That was a silly one but we figured we would put it in there anyway.

 With that, I know we have gone over a lot. I want to remind everyone that this webinar will be archived. We went through things quickly but you can watch it again starting probably next week. From here, I want to hand it over to my good friend Jim Sheldon. He will take us into the depths of federal benefits and ABLE funds in greater detail than I did. >> Thank you, Chris. Chris has described the SSI policies that apply to ABLE funds namely up to 100,000 in the account is excluded. They are not counted by the SSI policy. He also went through the key Medicaid policy that allows you to keep Medicaid even if those funds in the ABLE Account exceed $100,000. I will do - - what I will do is talk about how the SSI and Medicaid policies work their way into a couple of other benefit programs. [ Indiscernible-low audio.] if you go to the next slide. This is the next one shares with you where the Medicaid policy of - - comes from. It's a medical director from the centers for the services from last September. It pretty much paralleled the SSI rules in terms of that. It's a big difference being that you can have any amount of assets as long as they don’t exceed that.

Again saying that Medicaid contributions made by the beneficiary, those count as income in the Medicaid program. If they are made by third parties, they are not counted by Medicaid. That's pretty much the same as the SSI role. Similar to SSI, if there are distributions from the ABLE Account and we will talk about this next week, as long as those distributions meet the criteria as qualified disability expenses, they will not be counted by Medicaid as income for determining eligibility.

Moving onto the next slide. I want to talk briefly about something called the work incentive. It will work our way into the hypothetical. 1619 B is a work incentive that exists in all states. A person can keep Medicaid in many cases, if the assets - - SSI is terminated because they are working and they have earnings being budgeted. If you were to go into the SSI policies, you would see that states have individual thresholds or limits of how much income you can have and still be eligible for Medicaid. Those range from 27,000 to more than $66,000. And this could be subject - - the subject of a much longer presentation. A key here because 1619(b) is considered a form of SSI benefit albeit a non-cash benefit. 1619(b) like SSI’s limited to $2000 in countable resources. What is really important here is that the 1619(b) program is not going to count ABLE Account assets. There are really two reasons to support that policy. One is the SSI policy provisions because 1619(b) is a form of SSI. They will not count the ABLE Account up to $100,000. Because of that federal CMS policy, even if those balances exceed $100,000,

 those assets will be exempt or excluded. That is very important.

On the next slide I want to talk briefly about something called a Medicare savings program. Just by way of background, Medicare is a health insurance program run by the federal government, typically associated with the receipt of some type of Social Security benefit. With the ABLE Account we will assume that is SSDI. When someone gets Medicare part B and if you take it, there is normally a premium of $134 a month. If you become eligible for the first time this year. The Medicare savings program so there’s three of them can pay the part B premiums and one of the three, the qualified Medicare beneficiary program can also pay for the deductibles and co-pays. Co-pays for part B are generally going to be 20 percent of the cost of the actual service. Some of the services that Medicare will pay for are expensive like durable medical equipment and wheelchairs. Now what is interesting and this is how we get through the back door with SSI, states are required in determining eligibility. To follow SSI rules. We just want to talk about assets today. Assets will vary a little bit from state to state. If the state does have an asset limit, it cannot be lower than 7000-or $60. Some states have much higher assets. It will probably exist in the great majority of states. Here is what is cool here. Medicare savings program eligibility is not going to be affected by assets in the ABLE Account. Why? They have to follow SSI rules. This is another potential benefit. [ Indiscernible-low audio.] similarly the account distributions will not be counted by that Medicare savings program as income. The next slide shows us the last thing I want to talk about before we go into the case scenario is state vocational or rehabilitation agencies. They can provide a pretty wide range of items and services to support a work goal. Often it can be expensive things like tuition. Now states are allowed to decide if they have a financial needs test and to set their own criteria. In my experience every state will do this. It will vary from state to state. Here is how that plays in. If someone is an SSI beneficiary, they are exempt from the VR agency financial need criteria. If there are assets in the ABLE Account, they will meet the financial needs texts based on the SSI test or they will be exempt from that. Although the payments for educational or vocational expenses from an ABLE Account are allowed. The failure to make those distributions should not affect the financial needs status. It’s very important when you talk about people with disabilities who have the ABLE Account that are going to college or another training program. Let's jump into the case scenario. That will take us to slides forward.

Ava is 21 years old. She gets SSI of $750 monthly which is a standard amount for Tate that - - states that do not pay a supplement. She gets Medicaid. She is spinal cord injured, she uses a wheelchair full-time. Some of the examples of what Medicaid has paid for are the power wheelchair, medications, and a home health aide. She is in college. She will graduate in 2020, she hopes to retain Medicaid when she goes to work. She wants to continue to pay for home health services and a replacement power wheelchair when she graduates. She expects to learn $33,000 or more as an entry-level math teacher presently she has $185,000 in a special needs trust from a lawsuit.

Ava is currently living in a ranch home with her parents. The ranch home tends to be a housing option of choice for people in wheelchairs. She hopes to move into her own apartment in the summer. She hopes to remain there for her last two years of college and maybe stay there when she gets the first job. The problem is, rent will be 950 per month and she is assuming that to pay for that she will need a student loan. We are going to try to avoid that. The problem, despite the amount of income in the trust, if the trust pays for the rent under SSI policy? It may be reduced for as much as $250 per month. That would be standard. Let’s look at the VR agency support. The VR agency helped her a lot. They paid for tuition, books, and transportation. They paid for a driver evaluation that supports her ability to drive a modified van. How will she pay for this? If she can come up with the funds to purchase the van it will assume a cost of about $27,000. The VR agency will cover the van modifications to allow her to use that van at a cost of about $40,000. Only if she continues to be financially eligible for that service.

She is looking to meet the following things. Keeping Medicaid for the next two years and even after she starts school. Buying the van for $27,000. Having the VR agency pay the $40,000 in van modifications. Setting up a future ABLE Account, but her parents and Ava don't have money to put in that account. How will she do it?

We will say it is July 28 - - I did this hypothetical a while ago. She will set up an account in a state that has national ABLE accounts. We will assume she lives in the dozen or more states that don’t have one. She will have the trust make an immediate deposit of $15,000, the maximum amount. I don't think it was covered in this session, but it was covered in other webinars. Trust can make deposits into the ABLE Account. Now the ABLE Account is used to pay the $950 in rent. ABLE payments for rent are not treated as income. That is powerful. The SSI payment is not reduced. The Medicaid is retained. She is able to get into quality housing, wheelchair accessible near campus.

She will work with the trust and they will plan to make $15,000 into the ABLE Account. That is the limit. Again the trust is allowed to do that. I believe Chris mentioned this, it is tied to the IRS exempt gift tax amount which could increase in 2019 or 2020. She will look at that ABLE Account continuing to pay the full monthly rent with her full SSI and Medicaid continuing and the financial eligibility continuing for VR agency services. Because she is exempt.

Her final years of college, the VR agency will continue to pay for college. She retained SSI despite the ABLE Account funds. I repeat the federal VR policy. I am going to ask you to trust me on the math here. The ABLE Account paid for four months of rent in 2010. She retained about $11,000. After a couple years of paying for rent, she will have about $16,000 left at the end of 2020. Those trust balances are going down. She is able to use the trust in connection with the ABLE Account to maximize her ability to pay the expenses. >> She may be able to use the ABLE Account supplement with the - - for what the VR agency may not be able to pay for. For instance, based on my experience and the experience of advocates around the country, they may not be able to pay for a new tablet computer if they already funded a laptop. She will need professional clothing for student teaching, job interviews. She will probably want a new smart phone. We will try to get what we can from the VR agency. ABLE allows her to write a check to get these things. She may want to take a summer school course to ease the burden of meeting all the required courses for her degree. If she can't get the VR agency to do it she may want to use that to hire a tutor to get a required course outside of her major pick she's going to want to buy a foreign one printer, copier, scanner, and fax for her apartment to support her studies and job search. Lastly, she will purchase that van. She will go out and get a loan. She will use the ABLE Account to make a $5000 down payment. I have her borrowing money from one of the state equipment funds. [ Indiscernible-low audio.] the VR agency should leverage this money will pay $40,000 for the van modifications allowing her to drive as a wheelchair user. The very last slide is she starts that first job as a math teacher and she will keep her Medicaid through the 1619( b) work incentive. The starting pay of $33,000 per year will meet the threshold of eligibility and about half's - - half of the states. The 1619(b) program will ignore both the ABLE Account assets and the trust. She can move forward still having something in the ABLE Account and still having the trust. She has managed to work her way through college and get a job. Chris I don't know that I am leaving much time for questions. I am willing to hang on if you want to go past 3:00.

I appreciate you taking the time to highlight the way these funds intersect with some of these benefits. I think it’s incredible the profiles that you put together for us that bring to life the benefits related to being an ABLE Account owner. We have a couple minutes. I want to make sure we included Marlene. She is the Social Security expert. I know her and I've had this conversation on multiple times. I think it may be for the benefit of the audience. Marlene as a person who understands Social Security back and forth, and a lot of the rules related to being eligible for things like SSI, what does ABLE mean to SSI beneficiaries with respect to being able to build a better financial future?

Well, Chris. It has been transformative for individuals. This is for receiving SSI or other means tested benefits. Many of the folks in the audience today no SSI or supplemental security income is a basic program. Sometimes referred to as a program of [Indiscernible] because it’s for individuals who have little income or resources or money in the bank. Prior to the ABLE Act, individuals receiving SSI, they couldn't spend for their future or save money over and above the resource limit. That is only $2000 for an individual. It was at that level for as long as I can remember. They were locked into a life of property. - - Poverty. In addition, the monthly payment for SSI, the federal benefit rate is $750. That is not a lot of money. If an unexpected emergency arose like a problem with housing or transportation or the individual had other needs like assistive technology or they needed specialized medical equipment or there was a medical emergency, they would not have the funds to cover it. It allows folks with a disability who are eligible for ABLE to plan and save for their future. As was her during the webinar, contributions can be made by almost anyone. They could be family members or the beneficiary or relatives. It can even be an employer. As Jim added it could be a's trust. - - Be a trust. I think there is an expanded definition of who can contribute to a trend - - ABLE Account through the IRS code. If folks want to look there they can see how a person is defined. The annual contribution up to that limit, they don't affect any means tested benefits. They are not counted as income. Prior to ABLE they would be. For me, as someone who has a family member with a disability or I think I can speak for you, Chris, because I know you have a family member with a disability. Peace of mind knowing that the needs will be met when I am no longer there or my family members will be there. I know many individuals with disabilities they have supports in place. Sometimes they just don’t cover everything. There may be other things that are needed or wanted. I think it has been transformative. Jim mentioned 1619(b) which is crucial for folks to maintain Medicaid. The Medicare savings programs, the VR services. There is so much out there. ABLE to me is an answer to a prayer. Now I can rest assured that at least my family member and I think yours too, will be in a better place with ABLE.

Great. I appreciate that. I appreciate the audience sticking with us. We are a few minutes over but it's so important to hear that from you. Someone who knows their stuff inside and out. Certainly as you mentioned, is the brother of a person with a disability it is evident how transformative this opportunity is for people with disabilities to be able to save without having to give up the supports and services that allow them the independence to live shoulder to shoulder with their ABLE peers. It is an exciting new law and new program and we want to do everything we can to make sure people feel comfortable enrolling and taking advantage of these benefits associated with being an ABLE Account owner. With that, we are a few minutes over. Up on your screen you see what we will talk about next week is the third webinar. As part of our #ABLEtoSaveCampaign, we will have focused on understanding what the funds can be used for. That is qualified disability related expenses. I encourage folks. We will get the registration up on the website here by the end of the day. I encourage folks to go to the website and register for that. Please follow us on social media. We will post informative videos and testimonials from family members and people with disabilities who enrolled in an ABLE Account and we will tell you how it changes their lives for the better. With that, thank you so much. Jim thank you. Marlene. Thank you. Thank you for everyone who joined us today. Hopefully we will see everyone back here a week from today to talk about our next topic. Have a great evening. Goodbye, everyone.

[Event Concluded]