



**ABLE** | NATIONAL  
RESOURCE  
CENTER

# Achieving a Better Life Experience with an ABLE Account

ABLE Account Basics

January 2025

# ABLE National Resource Center

The [ABLE National Resource Center](#) (ABLE NRC) provides all the ABLE information you need in one place. ABLE NRC shares reliable, objective information about ABLE plans, including plan comparisons, best practices and strategies to increase savings for now and into the future.

**Our mission** is to educate, promote and support the positive impact ABLE can make on the lives of millions of Americans with disabilities and their families.

# **ABLE Account Basics: Use of Presentation**

This presentation is intended for use by professionals, advocacy groups, service providers, educators and others to share with your respective networks. It can also be used as a resource for self-study.

Thank you, in advance, for learning more and helping to spread the word about the positive impact ABLE accounts can make!

# ABLE Account Basics: Purpose

- This ABLE National Resource Center (ABLE NRC) slide deck provides introductory information about ABLE savings / investment accounts, highlights the benefits of ABLE accounts and provides key resources to access additional ABLE-related information.
- Visit the [ABLE NRC website](https://www.ablenrc.org) at **ablenrc.org** to learn more about ABLE federal guidance, to explore ABLE plan comparison tools and to access direct links to open an ABLE account. Podcasts, webinars, decision guides and financial wellness resources are available on demand 24/7 and are free to access.



# The Basics of Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE)

# ABLE is a Tool to Obtain Financial Stability

- The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act allows millions of people with disabilities the chance to save and invest money without paying taxes on investment earnings.
- Account owners who receive needs-based benefits can save more than the savings limit (usually \$2,000) and still get benefits if they need them now or in the future.
- ABLE savings can be spent on things that help the person stay healthy, independent and have a good life. This includes basic needs like food and housing.
- Anyone can deposit money in the account. The 2025 annual contribution limit is \$19,000. Employed account owners may contribute more.

# Why Save in an ABLER Account? (Slide 1 of 3)

Up to \$100,000 in savings is disregarded as a resource and will **NOT** affect Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Any amount of ABLER savings up to the plan's limit, currently between \$235,000 - \$596,925 depending on the plan, will **NOT** affect eligibility for:

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA),
- Housing Assistance - Housing and Urban Development programs (HUD),
- Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP),
- Social Security and Disability Insurance (SSDI), or
- Medicare (Entitlement to Parts A, B, C, or D)
- Medicaid benefits including Medicaid Waiver Services and Medicare Savings Programs.

**ABLE Decision Guide:** [Understanding ABLER Account Savings and Public Benefits](#)

# Why Save in an ABLER Account? (Slide 2 of 3)

## ABLE account tax advantages:

- Many ABLER plans have a variety of investment options within the ABLER account. **ABLE investment growth is tax-free;**
- Direct contributions into an ABLER account from family, friends, a Special Needs or Pooled Trust or a 529 College Savings Plan rollover, do not count as income by federally funded means-tested benefit programs (unlike many other types of savings / investment accounts).
  - For example, withdrawals from a 403(b), 401(k), or IRA plans is considered countable income for means-tested benefits like SSI and Medicaid.



# Why Save in an ABLE Account? (Slide 3 of 3)

## There are Extra Costs when Living with a Disability

- Households with a working age adult require, on average, 29% more income a year to obtain the same standard of living as a comparable household without a member with a disability;
- ABLE account savings can help cover many of these extra costs.

**Source:** Morris, McGarity, & Goodman published work:

[The Extra Costs Associated With Living With a Disability in the United States](#)

# Who is currently ABLE Eligible?

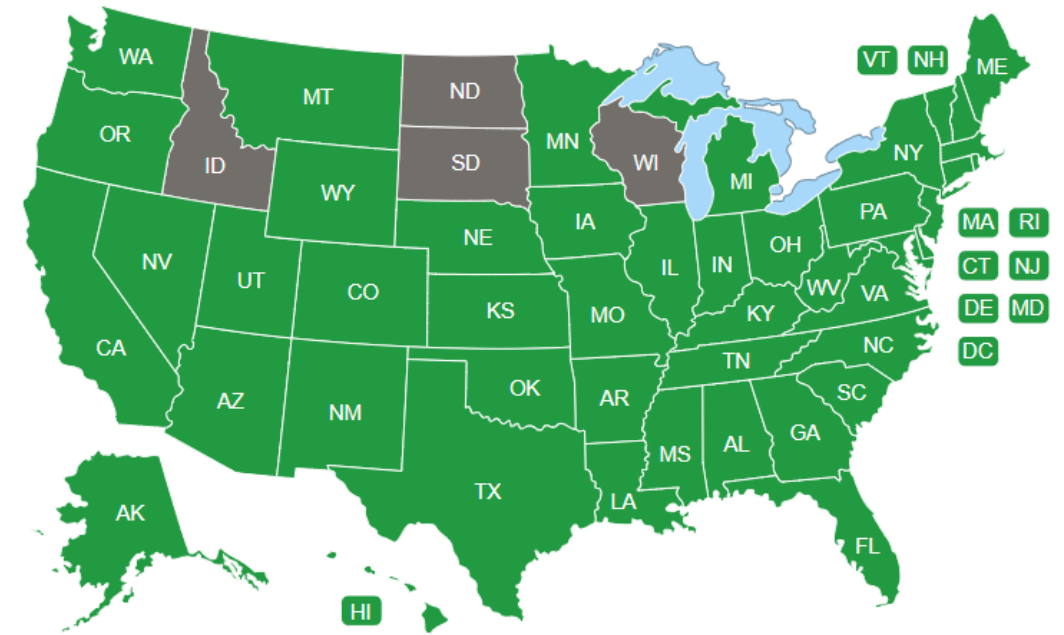
- A person who has received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) since before age 26.
- A person who has a disability that began before age 26 but has not received SSI or SSDI may ask their doctor to sign a [disability certification](#) indicating that their disability began before age 26 and results in severe functional limitations.
- A person who works and no longer receives SSI and/or SSDI but still has a disability continues to be ABLE eligible if their disability began before age 26.
- A person can open an ABLE account at any age.

# Expanded ABLE Eligibility

- The ABLE Age Adjustment Act goes into effect on January 1, 2026, which is estimated to expand ABLE eligibility to an additional 6 million Americans.
- The other eligibility factors on previous slide remain the same; however, the age of disability onset is changing to include those who have a disability that began before age 46.
- A person may ask their doctor to sign the disability certification in 2025 to prepare for opening their ABLE account in January 2026.

# State ABLE Programs

- There are 46 state ABLE programs, plus D.C. There are a total of 49 plans from which to choose.
- If you are ABLE eligible, you can open one ABLE account; many plans accept out of state residents.
- An ABLE Program [Comparison Tool](#) and [Interactive State Map](#) is available on the ABLE NRC's website to help you pick the plan that is best for you.



# How Do I Open and Manage an ABLE Account?

- Most ABLE accounts are opened online; you can contact specific ABLE plans for alternatives if needed.
- Once the account is open, the account owner – the person with a severe disability - can choose to allow others to access various levels of information about the account and/or to take specified actions on the account.

## **ABLE Decision Guides:**

[Selecting and Opening an ABLE Account](#)

[Managing Your ABLE Account](#)

# Contributions into an ABLER Account

In 2025, a total of \$19,000 from all sources can be contributed into the ABLER account by the person with a disability and/or from:

- **Friends**
- **Family**
- **Special Needs / Pooled Trust**
- **529 Qualified Tuition Plan rollover**
- **Employer**

**ABLE Decision Guide: [Finding Funds to Save in an ABLER Account](#)**

# Additional Contributions

## Put ABLE to Work for you –

An ABLE Account Owner who

a) works and

b) does NOT have deposits made to an employer sponsored retirement plan - within that calendar year;

may contribute up to an additional **\$15,060 or equal to their** employment earnings, or whichever is less, into their ABLE account. This amount is higher for residents of Alaska: \$18,810 and Hawaii: \$17,310 (2025 figures).

# When is a Good Time to Open an ABLE Account?

## Now!

- It's never too early nor too late to get started on your path to ABLE.
- You do not need to know all things about ABLE to get started.
- State plans have a minimal initial contribution requirement to open an account (\$0-\$50; Majority of plans are \$25)
- You can open an account online at any time
- If you are unsure about investing, you can open an ABLE account and choose to use the savings or checking option. You don't have to select an investment option.



# How to use ABLER Account funds

## Qualified Disability Expenses (QDEs)

- Education;
- Basic living expenses including food and shelter;
- Housing including utilities, rent, modification, mortgage, property taxes;
- Transportation;
- Employment training and support;
- Assistive technology;
- Personal support services;
- Health care expenses, wellness, prevention;
- Legal fees and financial management;
- Funeral and burial expenses

### **ABLE Decision Guide: Determining Whether Something is a QDE**

Note, transferring ABLE funds to a trust is **not** a qualified disability expense.

## Flexibility of ABLE QDEs

A QDE must benefit the ABLE account owner but does not have to be exclusively used by the ABLE account owner.

Examples:

- A parent may use their child's ABLE account to purchase a vehicle that the child (and others) will be transported in;
- A parent may use their child's ABLE account to purchase a home that the child will be raised in.

It is important to consider the ABLE account owner's best interests and protect their rights regarding the use of ABLE funds; you may consult a legal expert or your state Protection & Advocacy representative through the [National Disability Rights Network](#).

## Best Practice Tip

Deposit benefits and earned income into a checking account. Pay for housing, food and monthly expenses from the checking account. Deposit extra/unused funds into the ABLER account at the end of each month.

# ABLE Success – Learn from Others



ABLE NRC Ambassadors are ABLE account owners and family members who share their success stories to encourage others to open and maximize the benefits of an ABLE account.



# ABLE NRC Resources

# ABLE National Resource Center Website

Visit our website at [ablenrc.org](https://ablenrc.org) for:

- [ABLE FAQs](#)
- [ABLE Decision Guides](#)
- [ABLE Programs by State](#)
- [Compare ABLE Programs](#)
- [Meet our ABLE Ambassadors](#)
- [ABLE to Save Podcast](#)
- [ABLE Webinars](#)
- [AchievABLE Newsletter](#)



# ABLE Decision Guide Series



## ABLE Decision Guide Series

- A series of step-by-step guides on key ABLERNC topics that provide multiple pathways to outcomes.
- Guides help increase ABLERNC understanding and assist in effective decision making.

## ABLE Decision Guides:

- [Am I ABLERNC Eligible?](#)
- [Selecting and Opening an ABLERNC Account](#)
- [Understanding ABLERNC Account Savings and Public Benefits](#)
- [Managing an ABLERNC Account](#)
- [Finding Funds to Save in an ABLERNC Account](#)
- [Determining Whether Something Is a Qualified Disability Expense](#)
- [ABLE Accounts and Working People with Disabilities](#)
- [Ready and ABLERNC to Work and Save](#)
- [Understanding ABLERNC Accounts, Special Needs Trusts and Pooled Trusts](#)



# ABLE NRC Toolkits

- [Employer Toolkit](#)
- [Home Ownership Guide](#)
- [Home Inheritance Guide](#)
- [Service Provider Toolkit](#)
- [Youth Transition Toolkit](#)
- [ABLE NRC Media Toolkit](#)
- **Coming soon: Veterans Toolkit**





# NDI Resources

- [National Disability Institute](#)
- [American Dream Employment Network \(ADEN\)](#)
- [NDI Assistive Technology Loan Program and AFP National List](#)
- [NDI Financial Resilience Center](#)
- [NDI Small Business Hub](#)

# Help Spread the Word!

- Please share information about ABLER accounts with friends, family and community groups!
- Subscribe to receive our [AchievABLE](#) newsletter and receive important ABLER-related updates.
- Connect with us on social media: [LinkedIn](#), [Threads](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) @theABLENRC.
- Participate in [ABLE National Resource Center webinars](#) to stay informed.
- Visit our [website at ablenrc.org](#) and check out our resources, including [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

# Thank You!