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Click. Apply. Save. A Step-by-Step Guide to ABLE Enrollment Caption Transcript

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>> Thank you for joining us today. The webinar will begin soon. This webinar is being recorded and the materials including a transcript will be placed in our resource library at the ablenrc.org.

Welcome, thank you for joining us today. The webinar will begin soon.

>> Welcome, thank you for joining us today. The webinar will begin soon. We know we are at the top of the hour and we're just waiting for a few more attendees to log on. Today's webinar is being recorded. The materials including a transcript will be placed in the ABLE NRC resource library. You can find it at ablenrc.org and the resource library is a navigation tab in the upper right hand corner and the first drop down menu option is our resource library and you can filter our resources by type and you can select webinars. Our most recent recording will display first on the list.

You have joined click. Apply. And save. A step by step guide for ABLE enrollment. We will begin in about one minute.

Welcome everyone. You have joined click. Apply and save. A step by step guide to ABLE enrollment. Before we get into the content of the webinar I have a few housekeeping slides that I would like to go through. On the next slide listing to the webinar. The audio for today's webinar can be accessed using the computer audio or by calling in by telephone. If you select computer audio please make sure your speakers are turned on or your headphones are plugged in. And if you do not have sound capabilities on your computer and you refer to listen by phone please dial 9292056709. And the meeting code is 821, 6684, 6814. Questions and technical assistance. For this webinar the chat feature is disabled. Today the question and answer box will be monitored by a full team of experts. We have Laurie L from Acensus. We have Daniel Nzouankeu from Vestwell state savings and we have Laurie Schaller and Marlene Ulisky from ABLE NRC. Both presenters have developed their material from frequently asked questions that are submitted on their respective platforms pertaining to ABLE enrollment. If you wait through each of their presentations it is very likely that your questions will be answered as part of their presentation.

We will answer questions that are placed in the Q&A box during the webinar. If your question is not answered, you may email info@ablenrc.org or visit our website ablenrc.org and contact us if our resources are not providing the answer you are looking for. For technical issues if you have any difficulties during the webinar, use the Q&A box to send a message to the NDI host or you may also email info@ablenrc.org with the subject line webinar help and we'll be sure to assist you. On the next slide captioning and American Sign Language interpretation. Real time captioning and American Sign Language, ASL interpretation are being provided. The captions can be found by clicking on the closed captions icon on your Zoom controls at the bottom of the screen. And again if you cannot see the captions after clicking this button or you do not see the ASL interpreters please alert the host via the Q&A box. Welcome to the webinar it is hosted by ABLE National Resource Center. We are an online resource center that provides all the ABLE information that you need in one place. We share reliable objective information about ABLE plans including plan comparison, best practices and strategies to increase your savings now and into the future. Our mission is to educate, promote and support the positive impact that ABLE can make on the lives of millions of Americans with disabilities and their families.

And my name is Jody Ellis and I am the Director of the ABLE NRC and we have curated a wide variety of materials since we were founded in 2015 and we are owned and managed by NDI. For today's agenda I will give a quick overview of the ABLE program and if you happen to be eligible but for some reason you have not yet opened your ABLE account because you're unsure of the enrollment process or you believe that opening an account is complicated or you may be currently in the enrollment pipeline and are wondering about next steps or you have not yet started the enrollment process or you're helping someone with the enrollment process, this webinar is for you. You will get a step by step break down of the process with screen shots of examples outlining the online enrollment experience. You will see screen shots of both Acensus and Vestwell ABLE program manager platforms and these two program managers address many of the ABLE plans that are across the country. There are a couple a handful of state plans that are not represented by these platforms but again this will explain much of the ABLE plan enrollment process. With that I will start with an ABLE overview and on the next slide ABLE is an acronym for Achieving a Better Life Experience. It was signed into law in address 2014 and ABLE accounts have been opened since 2016. And it is a savings or an investment account that is designed exclusively for people with disabilities. And it is modeled after 529 education plans. You may see reference to 529A. And the 529A plans

are ABLÉ plans. ABLÉ allows for millions of people with disabilities the opportunity to save and invest money and grow wealth. It is truly a pathway for people with disabilities to save for both their current and future needs.

Why save in an ABLÉ account? ABLÉ account owners can save without paying taxes on investment earnings. Any person or entity can deposit money into an ABLÉ account. Direct contributions into an ABLÉ account from family, friends, a special needs or pooled trust a 529 college savings plan roll over, those do not count as income by federally funded means tested benefit programs. Unlike some of other types of savings and investment accounts. ABLÉ savings can be spent on a variety of different things that help the account owner stay healthy, independent and to have a good life. And ABLÉ funds can be used to pay for the extra costs associated with living with a disability. An NDI study has shown that households with a working age adult with a disability requires on average 29 percent more income per year to obtain the same standard of living as a comparable household without a member of a disability. The ABLÉ savings can be used to help pay for some of these extra expenses.

Additionally the good news is that having an ABLÉ account is associated with many positive attributes. On the next slide you'll see that ABLÉ is correlated with increased financial literacy, increased self-efficacy, believing you can save, increased choice making, increased financial engagement and increased self-determination and all the of these outcomes are associated with improve life satisfaction and increased goal directed behavior. And NDI will be publishing these findings later this calendar year through a NIDILRR project. The next slide protects eligibility for public benefits. if you are on supplemental security income, you have been told for most of your life while you have been on those benefits that you can only have \$2,000 in savings and with an ABLÉ account up to \$100,000 in savings is disregarded as a resource and it will not impact your SSI. Then outside of SSI any amount of ABLÉ savings up to the state plan's limits and right now the state plan's limits range from \$235,000 to nearly \$600,000 depending upon the state plan. Any amount of those savings in an ABLÉ will not affect your eligibility for other public benefits programs such as FAFSA or student aid, housing assistance called HUD, supplemental nutrition assistance program, SNAP or other food assistance programs, social security disability insurance, Medicare, any of the parts and Medicaid benefits as well. saving in an ABLÉ account can also avoid social security administration over payments. According to the SSA being over asset limitations is one of the primary causes of over payments. Then also even if you do not need public benefits now an ABLÉ account can protect your eligibility for such

supports should the need arise in the future. ABLE provides an opportunity for all of us to change a mindset. Funds in a traditional account focuses energy on the needing to spin down to ensure that you're within the asset limits by these public benefit programs and funds in an ABLE account empower account owners to save up.

If you are ready to think about saving up and not to have to focus on spending down I'm here to present to you both Laurie and David. Lauri Maloney is the Director of the ABLE savings plan advocacy and growth at Acensus and that's the ABLE program manager for several ABLE plans throughout the country. And she's joined by David Bell the Vice President of Vestwell savings, state savings. Now I will turn it over to you, Lauri to get started with the Acensus platform.

>> Thank you Jody hello everyone and thank you for attending. If we can go to the next slide, please. Thank you. This is just a quick slide sharing the 23 states across the country that Acensus is the program manager for. As you can see we have some wonderful partners. Next slide, please. It's important to talk about the two ways to set up an ABLE account. Part one of this series we're going to look on the left hand side the individual account owner enrollment. Part two is coming up in July that's opening multiple accounts all under one log in. Today's focus is on that left hand side and it's all about that one account enrollment.

A few key pieces of information that we want to make sure that everybody has before we get started on how to open an account. Number one is who can own an ABLE account and number two is who can open an ABLE account. You see here that there are two key eligibility criteria that must be met. Someone's disability must be present before the age of 26. Plus one of the following. they are eligible for supplemental security income or social security disability insurance or they have a medically determinable physical or mental impairment with marked severe functional limitation that has lasted at least 12 continuous months or they have identified their condition on a social security administration's list of compassionate allowances conditions. Again one of these 3 things plus the age of disabilities onset. And great news, coming January 1 of 2026 that age limit will be bumping up to 46. remember you could be aid but you don't have to and having aid is not a requirement.

Next slide. Okay Who can open an ABLE account? It doesn't necessarily have to be the account owner and it's important to explain the difference between an account owner and the authorized individual. The account owner is the individual with a disability with capacity. And the authorized individual is someone

who may be able to open and manage that ABLE account on behalf of the account owner. And there's a priority order that you can see below that's listed. remember no matter who opens that account the eligible individual is the account owner and that they can have only one ABLE account.

Next slide, please.

All right. Let's begin. How do we open an account? Opening an account is quick and easy and once you know what information you should be providing that's great. Right? We encourage people to gather the basic information before they start. Such as you can see permanent address, birthday, you can see some type of identifier for example like social security number, EIN, driver's license, email address, the account owner's disability then the basis under which ABLE eligibility is declared which reviewed in a previous slide. Next slide, please.

Step number two is really determining how you would like to use the ABLE account and choose your investment options. There's a few things you really need to think about. Right? Number one, what disability expenses do you want to save for? Are they ongoing and maybe you need easy access to those funds? Is it saving for a rainy day? Is it something larger that's going to take you a little bit more time to save up? Or it may be all the above. The second thing is when will I need the money? Looking at expenses to determine are you going to need them short term, maybe 1 3 years or even longer. Then lastly what is your risk tolerance. You can see over to the right hand side that you're showing you a checking account to moderate to aggressive investments. And here's where you just must keep in mind that what risk you take and what investments is based off your need.

I think what is unique about our program which is the checking account option, is that it offers a debit card with access to over 40,000 fee free partner ATM's and that's a nationwide network. There are no overdraft or non sufficient funds fees. It's FDIC insured, you can tap into it when you need. It has tax advantages, you don't pay any taxes on interest earned or on withdrawals used for qualified expenses. Then here's something I really like too which is the instant alert. They're truly instant on account activity and online security and that debit card can be used on my type of purchase. Next slide, please.

Step 3. Pick a contribution method. How will you contribute to this account? Through a bank account for example, reoccurring contributions or a single contribution, through your paycheck, payroll direct deposit or a check. there are many different ways to contribute and save in your ABLE account. If you contribute

from a bank account you just have to have your standard information which is bank name, routing number, the account you'll be transferring the money from and the name on the bank account. If you're going to contribute from a paycheck you just want to verify with your employer's payroll office that you can participate then print out that payroll form, complete it then provide it back to the employer's payroll office.

If you would like to contribute via check you can print the deposit slip at the end of the enrollment process but no worries if you don't print that out we also include them in the statements and you can put that new account number on your check. Then one last way to contribute is through our U gift program where family and friends can give money to the account owner. over to the right I just wanted to share and I think Jody you had shared some of this too for 2025. An increase to \$19,000 can be contributed annually. ABLE account owner with earned income maybe eligible to make additional contributions that exceed that limit balance of \$100,000 are excluded from your SSI resource limits. next slide, please.

step 4 we're making great progress here. choose a delivery method for plan documents. would you like to be notified via email or mail? And that's your quarterly statements, your plan disclosure updates, transactions and profile confirmations and tax forms. we always encourage people to choose E delivery as it is the most real time and secure way to receive information and typically reduces the fees associated with owning an ABLE account.

next slide, please.

All right step 5. Security. We're we all are concerned about security. Right? at Acensus we are committed to the security of everyone's ABLE account. We do apply many different types of security measures and continuously monitor our systems to protect your account against fraudulent activity. not only do we ask for Username and password, we also have security questions, a security image and multifactor authentication.

Next slide, please.

step 6. Completing the account. we ask that you verify and submit your information, review and acknowledge terms and conditions, deposit or contribute funds into the account. Keep in mind you can contribute for as little as a dollar. It's great to contribute at the time of enrollment as you can imagine those dollars do add up over time. But you don't have to contribute to at the time of enrollment as

you do have up to 90 days to contribute. Congratulations you just opened an ABLE account. Next slide, please.

Okay just a reminder the upcoming webinar this is part two of the series on July 23 we're going to review entity solutions where it makes it easy for entities to manage multiple ABLE accounts on behalf of the many individuals they represent with a single sign on. More to come. Next slide.

All right, thank you everyone so much for your time. I'll now pass this over to David Bell from Vestwell. Thank you.

>> Thank you Lauri, appreciate that. I hope everybody knows how close of a knit community ABLE is. I was literally saw Lauri last week and many of her colleagues at a conference where we were meeting to find better new ways to enhance these savings programs Lauri I thank you so much for this. We may work for different organizations but we're all working for the same cause which is making sure that people have opportunities, which is important to us. I'm David Bell I work for Vestwell. I head up our ABLE savings programs here along with college savings as well. But I have a real strong tie to ABLE, I've been in the industry for a while. I used to work for a state treasury program where I launched the ABLE program and spent 9 years managing that program before coming over to work on this side of it. Vestwell is very passionate about ABLE. In fact an ABLE state program was the very first program that we built on our platform. We built it with ABLE in mind and we continue to enhance the program with ABLE in mind to make it even easier tool for individuals to use.

If we can go to the next slide.

Vestwell's honored to work with 19 different ABLE states which equal 20 different ABLE programs. How does that math workout? Well one of our states, Oregon has the Oregon ABLE savings plan for anybody that lives in Oregon then ABLE for all plan for anybody that lives outside of Oregon. We work with 19 ABLE states it equals 20 plans we're excited to work with these individuals but as mentioned before Acensus, Vestwell we work closely together to make sure we're offering great savings programs for everybody.

But it does look slightly different. The core concepts that Lauri went through are correct. The amount that can be saved per year, how you can serve somebody as an authorized individual. Much of that stays the same. We don't want you to have to worry about whether you're opening a savings program that's with Acensus or ABLE savings program that is with us at Vestwell or maybe the handful that are not with

either of our programs. Those core tenants that core aspect of it should stay the same and we're happy to answer any of those detailed specific questions for you at any time. But I will walk you through the enrollment flow if you're opening an account that is managed by Vestwell. If you can go to the next slide, please. The enrollment process really is simple and easy. We continue to make enhancements in Falk we're constantly making enhancements to our flow along the way. It can be done in less than 10 minutes and I know many people say yeah right that can never be the case. We track this information. We see it at a wider level where individuals are going through the enrollment process, where it's easy for them to continue and areas where it might take them a few extra minutes and we find ways to fix that enrollment flow to make it as easy as possible. Our average time it takes for an individual to successfully open an ABE account is just over 9 minutes. It really is easy to do. We're going to walk through a few pieces of this. There's the account verification making sure you are who you're supposed to be as Lauri mentioned security of these accounts are top priority. We want to hold your money safe and secure. They're the eligibility piece we'll walk through. Funding your account and then lastly using your account which is the most exciting aspect. You're saving your money and using your money. Before we move on I would like to just highlight one thing on the right hand side this would be the first thing that you're coming to when you're opening an account. I selected stable which is Ohio's ABE savings program it was the first able savings program to launch nationally back in 2016. I'm just using them as an example for the screen shots that I selected here. First thing you're doing is entering your email address then you're just verifying that you read through some important information.

If you see a plan disclosure statement, that's basically all the detailed information about these programs. It's a wealth of knowledge. It's a long booklet but that's where you're going to find all the details of these programs. Then we move forward we get started. Let's go ahead and go to the next page.

Before we dive into all this detail let me just do one more thing and I know Lauri it's important to Acensus and others as well. We want these programs to work for everybody and if possible we would like the individual with the disability to be the ones managing their accounts. It's not always the case and that's okay they can have somebody help them or manage their accounts for them but we want to make sure our entire websites, the portal, enrollment flow, the places where you manage your account, 9 legal documentation all of that we ensure is ADA compliant and we don't stop at ADA compliant to get into the real it's WCAG 2.0 the high level ADA compliance because we want this to be accessible to everyone. Vestwell also feels

it's important to communicate and work with individuals that may not speak English as their primary language. We have translated our entire enrollment flow, the dashboard, the saving portal where you manage your account, the program disclosure, the legal documents we've translated all of those into 8 different languages and we'll soon translate it to even more languages and you're able to change that right there on the screen when you're enrolling or when you're managing your account.

Go to the next slide. Account verification is one of the first aspects of opening an account with Vestwell. We can go to the next slide. Basically the first thing we're going to do is ask about the account owner, the beneficiary. They're the same thing when it comes to ABLE. The person the account's opened for is going to own all that money placed in there. They're the account owner and the beneficiary We first ask about them whether it's them enrolling for the ABLE account we'll ask them there or if it's somebody opening it for them. The first thing we ask about is the beneficiary, the account owner and they will enter their information. Next slide, please. The second thing we're going to do is verify that person. If it is the account owner or beneficiary opening the account we'll just make sure it truly is them. If it's an authorized individual or authorized Representative, we'll go ahead and verify their information. It's easy. You're just answering information you would expect to be answering. We use a system called PLAID. It makes sure that person is who they are and all they must do is answer a few questions about themselves. We can go to the next slide. Like I said some of the information that we're asking is information you expect. How this person identifies, their telephone number, their address, here you can see their social security number or their tax identification number as Lauri mentioned before. You're entering this information here That we can capture it for our systems but we're also entering this information here We can make sure the person opening the account is the current person. You can go to the next slide.

Another piece of security that we built into our systems is multifactor authentication. That's a fancy way to say you're entering your information then we're also proving that information was entered by the right person. In this case when you're going through the flow you will get a text message with a special code that you enter in here to make sure that you really are linked correctly.

Go to the next slide, please. Here you've been successfully verified. If you get stuck in any part of this situation or need to verify additional information the system is very seamless and easy. Is it asks you to upload a piece of identification and it gets you through the entire piece of the process without stopping but the vast majority of

individuals get all the way through the system completely verified without having to upload any information at all.

We can go to the next slide. The next piece of the enrollment flow is just your eligibility. Not ABLER accounts are not for everybody. They're for a specific group of individuals and I'm going to walk through some of that here. Lauri mentioned some of it I won't repeat that. It asked about the eligibility which is tied to the disability you might experience. The IRS regulations and the federal legislation that allowed us to launch ABLER programs has specific information in there. To make this simple though if your disability qualifies you to receive federal benefits like social security income or supplemental excuse me supplemental security income or social security disability insurance you might know that as SSI or SSDI, even if you're not using those your disability is qualified or if you don't know if your disability is qualified through that means you can have a physician or doctor fill out a form. You don't even need to send it to us you're just telling us you have it saying that your disability qualifies you for ABLER. Many people, most people know this and gets right through the process. Something I like to identify here is sometimes you will run into interesting things as you're applying for an ABLER account. This might be one of those. It's called a diagnosis code. Not everybody knows what their diagnosis code is. Unfortunately we have to ask this, it's part of the IRS regulations. We tried to make this as simple as possible. There is a place where you can just click and review what these diagnosis codes are. You can see many of them right here. There's only one additional one from here. And you can see underneath there's a list of different disability types that fit under each one. Just get as close as possible. We know some of you might experience disabilities that span multiple codes just choose the primary one. We also for our systems we tried to make it easier. We created a search feature in the diagnosis code. Maybe you experience Cerebral Palsy you can type that in and it would pop up code 4 nervous disorder. You can find it multiple different ways. Again we're trying to make it as easy as possible for you to be able to enroll. We can go to the next slide.

If as mentioned by Lauri if somebody else is opening the account for you, we're tied to making sure those individuals can legally do that for you. You'll get to a part of the enrollment flow and if you're opening it for yourself you won't have to do this. You can just move through the process. But if you're opening it for somebody else you're selecting how or what capacity you are and that could be might have power of attorney, might be a guardian or spouse or parent. You can see the list here and it is listed in the hierarchy. If there's somebody higher on that list that wants to or needs

to open that account they can. But you might be the parent and nobody up higher on that list is willing to open this account, you're able to open it up.

We can go to the next slide. Now we're going to be moving on to funding the account which is the exciting part. We know many people use ABLE accounts for long term savings. We also know that some people use it for daily transactions or both at the same time. That's okay. The ABLE account is made for you. The first thing you're going to do is put money into the account and you can choose many different ways as Lauri mentioned you. You can send in a check, you can link one bank account or many bank accounts or maybe a credit union account. You can use a promo code you might have received from your local ABLE savings program or there's a lot of different options to be able to put money into the account. This is just an example of quickly and easily linking your bank account. Lauri mentioned you can enter in your account number and routing number and some information and do it that way. We also at Vestwell give you the opportunity to just automatically link your bank account by using another system, same system plaid. You log on to the system and it links whatever account you want to your ABLE account. It's easy it takes a few seconds but you can add it other ways as well. Choosing the funding method this is just an example of some of the options you can do. We want to give you plenty of ways to put money into your account the first time then we give you a lot of different ways you can put money in or take money out of your account once it's already opened and funded. We can go to the next slide. Lauri spent some time talking about this on the Acensus side and it's on the Vestwell side as well. ABLE savings programs has multiple places you can save your money and many people choose more than one. you might be saving for short term spending, maybe money you need in the next few months or year. You might want to save that in let's say the FDIC option. That could be a very conservative place to put your money. Many people will also then be saving money for down the road. Maybe it's 2 or 3 years for a special piece of machinery or a trip or something to fix up their house to make it easier or better to live in. That money can be saved in other areas. You choose as the account owner or authorized individual you choose where that money is saved and you can save it in more than one place and it's okay. Just because you're choosing it for the first time the next time you put in money you can put it somewhere else if there's a different goal you're saving for. There's a lot of flexibility. The only thing you will mention though is something tied to the actual code the IRS kind of regulations here and the original legislation. If you have money in one savings option and you want to completely move all that money out of that savings option and move it to a different one you can do that but you're restricted to only do that two times per year. You can

always put new money into any option you want but if you want to move a section of money out because of the regulations you can only do that two times per calendar year and we'll notify you. Congratulations you moved your money you have one more option or if you can't do it again we would let you know. We can go on to the next slide.

We obviously want to make it easy for you to put money into your account right through the enrollment flow you can set up automatic contributions, that means you're setting up a day or multiple days or month or quarter or year to automatically have money go from your bank account into your ABLE account you can easily set that if you want. You don't have to. Here you see that place for a promo code. You might have gone to an event where ABLE was at and they gave you a promo code that has some dollar figure attached. You can enter it there. That money will be put into your ABLE account. Again we're trying to make it easy for you to put money in and take money out of your ABLE account. Let's talk about using your account. You've opened your account you've taken the 10 minutes that you needed to open the account. Let's talk about using your account. We want this to be accessible to you and available to you. if we can go to the next slide.

Once you've opened an account you will see something similar to this. Except for that orange bar across the top you're seeing that because I was using one of our demo environments and that's just warning me it wasn't a real account it was just a demo account. But otherwise this could be something that you would see if you opened a stable account. You can see here there's some tiles across that talk about your total balance. Well I just made my first deposit that money hasn't quite gotten in there yet but once it's in there you will see your total balance, you can see how much was your normal contributions and how much of it might have been ABLE to work contributions. ABLE to work is for people account owners who are working and not putting money into their work's retirement account. They can put extra money into their ABLE account. It's a provision that came about after ABLE was launched that allows those working to even save more money. Actually this year they can save up to \$15,000 more than the \$19,000 limit. It's a great provision if you are working and wanting to put some of your earned income and you can only put as much in as you're earning \$15,000 or the total amount you're earned that year you can put that extra amount in ABLE and we can show you how much is in each bucket and you will have access to it no matter what. If we can go back quickly and I'll wrap that part of it up. You can set a savings goal, you can order a prepaid card, Lauri mentioned the debit card that Acensus uses. We use a prepaid card that allows us to spend money, you load money and you have availability of that money

anywhere that is accepted by the credit cards. You can have gift contributions or set up your gifting page, create your own gifting page that's all specialized just for you and much, much more. This is the place also where you will take money out of your account, put more money into your account, all that. See your documents, states. We can go to the next slide.

This is an example of if you wanted to set a savings goal again you might want to save for a house, a car, you know, schooling or something as simple as a small trip to the town next door. You can do all that and you can set your savings goal and we'll track you along the way and show you how close you're getting. You don't have to do it but we want to make sure it's an empowerment tool for you and this is one way we can do that. You can go to the next slide, please. Vestwell is trying hard to find ways for you to use your account to work with your accounts and some of them are just fun ways of setting it up. One of the things we offer for many of our states is what's called a weather booster. Again you don't have to do this but you can do something as fun as setting it up to where maybe every time it rains in your zip code one dollar moves into your ABLE account or \$5 or what have you. Again we're trying to find fun and engaging ways for you to put money into your account and easy ways to take money out. This is called a weather booster. We can go to the next slide. I just wanted to thank you all. I know that we're ending a little bit early I'm excited to see some of the questions coming through. I've seen them pop up down here in my bottom screen. Keep those coming. Hopefully we can address some of these here. I just want to end this with we really are here to work with you. If you're running into any issues in opening or managing your ABLE account please reach out to the call center. We have amazing people that are knowledgeable on ABLE and these accounts that can help you through the process and again if you have ideas for us to make ABLE accounts better, more engaging and easier to use for you please let us know. We are constantly making updates and edits to our systems based on the information you're providing us. Jody thank you for this opportunity, Lauri thank you for all the information you provided, I'll hand it back over to you.

>> Great. Thank you much, David and Lauri for sharing such important information with us. And it's been nice to hear the ABLE enhancements that both of your platforms have made to make the enrollment process more simple for users. And what I've really heard in summary from both of you is that the ABLE enrollment process does not take a lot of time. Under 10 minutes. It was interesting to get Vestwell's average length of time to go through that enrollment process. We're talking under 10 minutes. It is not does not take a lot out of your day or out of your time to be able to do that. And then it is also secure and convenient with the

online enrollment options that are available and all the security measures that your platforms have put in place. I really appreciate you sharing the scene shots that will give some people an idea of what their platform or their portal or the dashboard would look like as they are setting up their ABLE account and to see the step by step process for people to click on, apply and save. And you know I was looking at some of the questions that were asked in the Q&A and certainly didn't even see half of them but just looking at a few and the next question is, hey, now that I am familiar a little with the enrollment process, how do I choose a plan? I know that in the chat there was a link that was provided which are ABLE NRC comparison tools that can help people look at different plans. And as David mentioned when he was first starting is that there are ABLE regulations and guidelines that are same across the plans. The eligibility are the same, the annual contributions are all the same. Your able to work the provision if you are working you might be able to distribute even more annually those are the same across all the different plans that may be available and there are many state plans that allow for out of state residents to participate in their plan. Then as David mentioned with the able for all throughout Oregon there are some plans that are nationwide plans. There are choices and it's great to have choices. And, you know it really will depend there are different features. You know we heard about debit card versus a prepaid card. There could be different features that are set up in a plan and you would just want to look at those and to see what would be most important to you. And it may also depend upon how you want to use your plan. If you have a more transactional account where you're going to be using the money month to month or it could be a long term savings account and that might make a difference as well.

Really if you do get stuck in this enrollment process just a reminder that we will have webinar recording available on our site that you can use for reference. We will have the slides, we will have the transcript and then as David had mentioned with the call centers the ABLE plans do have customer service numbers where you can call and get guidance. I really, again, thank you David and Lauri for bringing all this to our attention. I do want to share a couple ABLE NRC resources before we finish today's webinar. The next slide you will see a screen shot to the right of the ABLE NRC homepage and we're able at ablenrc.org and we have a variety of resources we curated for our visitors throughout the past 10 years. We have frequently asked questions. If your question didn't get answered today in the Q&A it is likely that someone has asked a similar question in the past and it may be in our FAQs. We have ABLE decision guides. We have ABLE programs by state. This again is part of our comparison tools. We have informational fliers, we have ABLE

NRC ambassadors who share and they share their experience about opening accounts. We have podcasts, we have webinar recordings, we have achievable news letters that are available and all this is to help you along your ABLE journey. On the next slide you'll see some of the different decision guides that we have. I mentioned on the previous slide we do have them. Then on the right are just an example of some of the different topics that we have for making decisions and these are step by step guides on a variety of different ABLE topics that provide multiple pathways to outcomes. We understand that ABLE is a journey and it is not a one size fits all and everyone will go through their ABLE journey differently and some of these decision guides can help you along the way. On the next slide I want to share that we also have some toolkits. We have an employer toolkit, we have a service provider toolkit, a transition age youth toolkit then a media toolkit and coming later in 2025 we will also be publishing a veteran's toolkit. NDI the National Disability Institute also has a bunch of other resources that can help advance financial empowerment for people with disabilities. We have an American Dream Employment Network called ADEN, there's a financial resilience center, there's a small business hub and the PDF link will have all these active links that you can easily access and if not just check out the website. As was mentioned a couple of different times we will have another upcoming webinar related to ABLE enrollment. And the webinar on July 23 and this link to register is going to be placed in the chat. This is specific for service providers. A service provider organizations can serve as authorized legal representatives for individuals who need support in managing their ABLE account. And this webinar that will be on July 23 is specific to do a group enrollment process for ABLE accounts. If you want to learn more about the support that organizations can provide or if you are supported by a service provider organization, please share the information with them. With that we do have a few more minutes remaining in our webinar. I don't want to put anyone on the spot but I will leave it to Marlene or Laurie. If there were a couple of questions maybe just limit it to two if there are any where there were trends where several people were kind of asking along the same question, maybe something that you feel could be clarified. We do have a moment to do that and if there are none then we can sign off early. But I wanted to just give you that opportunity.

>> Jody this is Marlene I was wondering if you could review the eligibility requirements for an ABLE account. I know someone posted in the chatbox their father developed dementia in his elder years, and I think they were thinking about opening an ABLE account. Could you just comment on that or review it?

>> Yes. Yes. Yes. And I think David even mentioned it too like an ABLE account really is not for everyone. Right? there are a few there are two different factors that determine if someone is eligible for an ABLE account. And the first one is age of onset of disability. Your disability onset in 2025 has to be before the age of 26. Then the great news though is that starting January 1 of 2026, we are talking about less than 6 months away that age of onset for disability has expanded to before the age of 46. as of January 1, of 2026 people whose disability began at the age of 45 or under, less, younger, they would be eligible for ABLE. That's the first criteria. The second criteria is severity of disability. The guidelines are saying that for a disability to count it must result in severe and marked functional limitations. that's the terminology that is used and you'll see even in David's screen that he shared there are some disability diagnoses or codes and diagnoses that were listed under each of those codes. Those are disabilities that are eligible based upon severity. That gives you some examples of the different types of disabilities. That's not all inclusive by any means but that could be a start. And if you have received social security benefits for this disability that began before the age of 26, soon to be 45, or soon to be before the age of 46, if you've received social security benefits for that disability you're automatically qualified in terms of assessing whether or not the disability results in severe and marked limitations. I hope I answered that Marlene if there is something else that I should clarify about that response just let me know.

>> No that was great Jody. Thank you.

>> Yeah, you're welcome.

>> Jody this is Laurie. People are asking what investment options are available within an ABLE account and what the investment growth to date is averaging for an ABLE account.

>> Yeah, I don't know if Lauri and David want to respond for their specific platforms. I'll just start very generally saying that the investment options depend upon the ABLE plan that you select. And it really will be a very individualized response. Because it is specific to the ABLE plan. Then the second piece that is just a very general response is that you do not have to select an investment option. I saw a couple of responses in the Q&A or questions in the Q&A like I don't know about investments, or it makes me a little nervous. You can open an ABLE account and not select an investment option. Just wanted to let you know that there was that opportunity where you do not have to select it and alternatively, 6 months later

you want one, you can always change your mind. That's the general response then I'll let Lauri or David chime in.

>> Yeah, all I would add and it's probably similar for Lauri but I would love to hear from her as well. Jody you're right. Each ABLE savings plan and again many, many states have their own ABLE savings plan and the ABLE National Resource Center is a great place to see all the different plans and if there's one in your states or a state you're interested in opening it they will have different savings options but Jody answered it perfectly. You get to best decide how to save your money. It's hard to predict any of the savings options based on previous performance. I'm sounding like a lawyer, I'm not a lawyer but we post on our websites how each of these savings and investment options have been performing in the past. It does not mean that's how they will perform in the future. Really you're going to have to do a little bit of research, talk to trusted individuals then make a decision but as Jody mentioned you can choose to save only in the cash option or the FDIC option now and in the future if you want to start saving in an investment option you sure can, you can choose multiple places.

>> I would say the same thing David and Jody. What your return will be is going to vary from person to person. Right? Because you have anything from a checking account all the way to moderate options and there's many of those to aggressive options and you could choose one, you could choose multiple and that's going to change what your return is. Exactly to what David was saying and Jody and it's up to you in terms of what you would select, what you would want to select and basically what your need was short term and long term and what you think the risk is and how much risk you can take.

>> Great. Thank you very much. I want to we're coming at the end of the hour I want to be respectful of everyone's time. I want to thank you for taking time out of your day to learn more about the power of ABLE and opening ABLE accounts. Click. Apply. Save. Until we connect again all of us at the ABLE National Resource Center, Vestwell state savings and Acensus wish you a healthy financial journey. Thank you.