

 **GETTING STARTED**

Setting up an ABLE Account

This tool helps you understand what an ABLE Account is and some of the things you may want to consider if you want to open one.

This tool can be used to help people with disabilities understand what an ABLE Account is and some of the things they may want to consider if they want to open one. An ABLE Account is a new way for people with disabilities to save. For many people with disabilities, saving may not seem to be an option that's available to them. This is because when people receive public benefits, some benefit programs may have "asset limits." Asset limits cap the amount of savings and other resources you can have and still maintain eligibility for certain public benefits. When a program has asset limits, savings may impact a person's eligibility for that type of assistance. There are savings options, however, that do not count against these asset limits.

What to do

- **Read through the eligibility requirements** to determine if an ABLE Account is an option for you.
- **Compare features of different ABLE Accounts** to choose the one that works for you.
- **Write down questions you have** and next steps you can take to set up an ABLE Account.



Setting up an ABLE Account can help you save for the future

1. Ask these questions to determine if an ABLE Account is an option for you.
2. Fill in the worksheet on the next page to compare features of different plans if you determine you would like to open an ABLE Account.

Do you meet the eligibility requirements?

- You have a significant disability with the age of onset of the disability that began before 26 years of age, and
- You are receiving benefits from SSI and/or SSDI, or you are eligible to file a disability certification with a qualified ABLE program or,
- You meet the Social Security's definition and criteria regarding significant functional limitations and receive a letter of certification from a licensed physician.

Do your goals match the qualified disability expenses allowed that can be paid from an ABLE Account without incurring taxes?

Qualified disability expenses may include:

- Education
- Housing
- Transportation
- Employment training and support
- Assistive technology
- Personal support services
- Health care expenses
- Financial management and administrative services and other expenses that help to improve health, independence, or quality of life.

Do you have the minimum contribution required to open an account?

This varies based on the requirements of each state program but is generally between \$25 and \$50.

Can you continue to make contributions to the ABLE Account once it is opened?

Regular (monthly) deposits may not be required, but regular contributions to savings can help you grow your account faster. Remember that family and friends can also make contributions to your ABLE Account.

Be sure you find out:

- How your money will be invested through an ABLE Account
- Fees you may have to pay to open and maintain your account
- Whether there are advantages available to in-state residents
- Penalties that may be charged
- Other features the account may provide, such as checks or a debit card.

For a list of ABLE Accounts offered by state, visit the ABLE National Resource Center at

ablenrc.org.

Program feature	ABLE program 1	ABLE program 2
1. Where is this program?		
2. Who is the program administrator?		
3. Does this program provide extra benefits to in-state residents? If so, what are they?		
4. Are there state tax benefits for contributions made into the account? If so, what are they?		
5. Does this program offer various saving and investing options? If so, what are they?		
6. Are there fees for keeping the account open? What are they?		
7. Are there limits on disbursements from the account? If so, what are they?		
8. Does this program offer a debit card? If so, what is the fee to use it?		
9. Does the program offer check writing?		
10. Are there other features that are important to you?		

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