

# INDEPENDENCE CENTER NEWSLETTER – May 2023

## ECI Operational Plan

Independence Center, Inc. (ECI) recognizes the impact that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) had on the people we work with. Since March 2020, we have established an operational plan to address safety concerns and to remain available to participants and others. The current plan includes the following:

- ECI's office is open for scheduled appointments only;
- ECI Independent Living Coordinators are available. Contact your Coordinator to schedule an appointment to discuss your goals;
- ECI staff are available by phone and email, Monday - Friday, 9:00am-5:00pm (closed Memorial Day);
- ECI has a few in-person group activities monthly; and
- ECI updates our Facebook page and website to reflect this policy and any changes.

## Medicaid Annual Reviews Beginning Again

Virginia Medicaid will soon return to the normal enrollment processes used prior to COVID-19. The Virginia Department of Medical Assistance (DMAS) is working with community partners, advocates and members to make sure eligible Virginians keep getting high quality health care coverage.




If you use Virginia Medicaid, take steps to get ready now for your Medicaid redetermination process. To be sure that you receive important paperwork about your Medicaid, update your mailing address and phone number with Virginia Medicaid by contacting one of the following three options:

- Online at [www.commonhelp.virginia.gov](http://www.commonhelp.virginia.gov);
- Call Cover Virginia at 1-855-242-8282; or
- Call your local Department of Social Services.

## Summer Youth Program Youth Endependent Advocates! (YEA!)

- WHO:** Youth with disabilities ages 16-24
- WHAT:** Independent Living Skills Training, Goal Planning, Advocacy, Work Readiness, Social Interaction  
Interactive events will give youth with disabilities a chance to learn new skills, learn about their rights, and to socialize with others. Participants should be motivated to be involved in activities with others and interested in learning and sharing.
- WHEN:** July 10 – August 4      Monday-Thursday each week      1:00-5:00pm each day
- WHERE:** Independence Center, 6300 E. Virginia Beach Blvd, Norfolk  
One event a week will be at a different community location.
- TRANSPORTATION:** Participants will arrange their own transportation. Paratransit and bus tickets provided.
- ACCOMODATIONS:** Accommodations for disability will be provided. Request when registering.
- REGISTRATION:** Pre-registration required. Must be referred by a Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services counselor. Session will be filled on a first come, first served basis.
- CONTACT:** Sarah Cook, [scook@endependence.org](mailto:scook@endependence.org), 757-351-1585

# MAY 2023

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
		2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 <b>ECI Board Meeting</b>  at ECI 12:00pm – 3:00pm	11	12	13
14	15	16 <b>Participant Led Event*</b>  <b>Carrabba's Italian Grill</b> <b>Chesapeake</b> 12:00 – 2:30pm	17 <b>IL Skills Training</b> <b>HRT Paratransit</b>  at ECI 2:00 – 3:30pm	18	19	20 <b>Youth IL Training</b> <b>(Ages 16-24)</b> <b>Employment</b>  at ECI 1:30 – 3:00pm
21	22	23	24 <b>Medicaid Waiver</b> <b>Workshop</b>  at ECI 2:00 – 3:30pm	25	26	27
28	29  <b>ECI CLOSED</b>	30	31	*The May 16 event is organized by participants. ECI staff will not be present. Bus and paratransit tickets will not be provided by ECI. Carrabba's Italian Grill is located at 1217 N. Battlefield Blvd.. Chesapeake.		

**ENDEPENDENCE CENTER, INC. (ECI) EVENTS**  
**HELD AT ECI, 6300 E. VIRGINIA BEACH BLVD, NORFOLK**  
**MAY 2023**

**10<sup>th</sup> ECI Board Meeting 1:00 – 3:00pm at ECI**

**WED** The Endependence Center Board of Directors meets every other month. Meetings are open to the public.

**17<sup>th</sup> Independent Living Skills Training: HRT Paratransit 2:00 - 3:30pm at ECI**

**WED** Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) paratransit staff will customer expectations and responsibilities when using paratransit services. You will meet some new HRT/Via faces and paratransit management.

**20<sup>th</sup> Youth Independent Living Skills Training: Steps to Getting a Job 1:30-3:00pm at ECI**

**SAT** Overview of basic steps to preparing for and seeking employment. This event is open to all youth with a disability ages 16-24.

**24<sup>th</sup> Medicaid Home and Community-Based Waiver Workshop 2:00 – 3:30pm at ECI**

**WED** Learn the basics of Waiver eligibility and services. Information about changes to these services over the past few years will be discussed.

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**PARTICIPANT LED EVENT**

Tuesday, May 16, 12:00 – 2:30pm  
Carrabba's Italian Grill  
1217 N. Battlefield Blvd., Chesapeake

Participants schedule these events. ECI staff will not be present. HRT bus and paratransit tickets are not provided by ECI for this event.

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**COMMUNITY INFORMATION**

Virtual Work Incentive Seminar

Wednesday, May 24, from 3:00pm to 4:30pm. This month's Virtual Work Incentive Seminar Event (WISE) topic is "Ticket to Work for America's Veterans." This webinar will discuss pathways to employment for people who receive both Social Security disability and Veterans disability benefits. You must register for this online event at <https://choosework.ssa.gov/wise/eventdetails#>



Disability Advocacy & Services

Endeppendence Center, Inc.  
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Norfolk, VA 23502

**Phone:**

(757) 461-8007 Voice  
(757) 461-7527 TDD

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**Website:**

www.endeppendence.org

**Newsletter alternate format:**

contact 757-351-1586 or  
tmano@endeppendence.org

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## Schedule Changes

Check the ECI website:  
[www.endeppendence.org](http://www.endeppendence.org)  
or call  
757-461-8007, option 4

## Accommodations

To request accommodations  
for ECI activities:  
757-351-1586 voice  
757-461-7527 TDD  
tmano@endeppendence.org

## Social Media

**Facebook:** Endeppendence  
Center, Inc.-Norfolk, Virginia  
**Twitter** @ECINorfolk