

DP EXPRESS

WINTER 2024



Hurricane Helene was not just a force of nature but a test of resilience, community, and the human spirit. For those in its path, it brought more than wind and rain; it brought moments of fear, uncertainty, and profound loss. Families watched their homes—a lifetime of memories—disappear beneath rising waters or crumble under howling winds. Streets turned into rivers, power was lost, and routines were shattered in an instant.

But, as the Waters began to recede, people rose up. Strangers shared food, water, and shelter, reminding us that humanity rises above the storm in times of crisis. People who had lost so much found comfort in the smallest gestures—a helping hand, a shared meal, a word of encouragement. Helene proved the strength of those it tried to break; when the winds tear us apart, we are capable of coming together—stronger, kinder, and more determined than before.

Throughout this time, we at DisAbility Partners have been working hand in hand with FEMA, The American Red Cross, and a variety of other organizations to ensure that the unique needs and concerns of people with disabilities are not only heard but truly understood. Our ongoing efforts are dedicated to reminding these organizations that the disability community faces challenges unlike any other. The greatest danger to people with disabilities often comes from the lack of accessibility—whether it's structural barriers or financial obstacles. Together, these issues represent the most significant vulnerability we face as a community, and we are committed to making sure our voices continue to guide the way toward a more inclusive future.

We are here for you, whether it is to help you find resources,
or just lend an ear.



Resources

Assistance Programs

If you're facing challenges with utility bills or other expenses, consider reaching out to the following organizations to explore to see if you qualify for assistance:

Buncombe County

THE ARC OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY

<https://www.arcofbuncombecounty.org/>

(828)253-1255

Buncombe & Henderson County

EBLEN CHARITIES

<https://www.eblencharities.org/>

(828)255-3066

ABCCM

<https://www.abccm.org/>

(828)259-5300

Buncombe, Henderson, Jackson, Madison, McDowell, Polk, Rutherford, and Transylvania county

WNC BRIDGE FOUNDATION

<https://www.wncbridge.org/resources/grants/>

(828)277-4815

THE LIEAP PROGRAM

<https://www.duke-energy.com/home/billing/special-assistance/low-income-eap-nc>

The LIEAP program, short for Low Income Energy Assistance Program, is a federally-funded program that provides a one-

time vendor payment to help eligible households pay their heating bills. The program runs from December 1st through March 31st or until funds are exhausted.

For more information on the LIEAP Program call your local Department of Health and Human Services

Madison County

Mars Hill Baptist Church

67 N Main Street

Mars Hill, NC 28754

(828)689-2911

Andrews Catholic Church

14 Brook Street

Mars Hill, NC 28754

(828)-689-3719

Rutherford County

Chase Corner Ministries Address

1604 Chase High Rd, Forest City, NC. 28043

828.247.0096

Salvation Army Address:

256 W Main St, Forest City, NC 28043

(828)-287-0119

Polk County

Thermal Belt Outreach Ministry

134 White Dr. Columbus, NC 28722

(828)894.2988

<https://www.tboutreach.org/>

Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach

2570 Memorial Hwy Lake Lure, NC 28746

(828)625-4683

<http://www.hickorynutgorgeoutreach.org/>

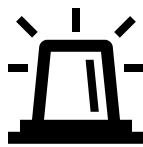


As a CIL, What Does Consumer Directed Mean to Us?

Consumer direction is a core principle for Centers for Independent Living (CILs), emphasizing that people with disabilities—not service providers or institutions—are in control of the decisions that affect their lives. This philosophy ensures that individuals guide the design, delivery, and evaluation of services, as well as the policies that impact them. Consumer direction focuses on empowering people with disabilities to identify their needs, set their goals, and advocate for their rights, reflecting the independent living movement's commitment to self-determination, autonomy, and equal opportunity.

This approach differs from a person-first perspective, which emphasizes seeing the individual before their disability (e.g., "person with a disability" rather than "disabled person"). While person-first language seeks to reduce stigma and highlight human dignity, it is primarily about framing language and perceptions. Consumer direction, on the other hand, goes beyond language and into actionable empowerment, ensuring that people with disabilities are active participants in decisions about their care, lives, and communities.

The importance of consumer direction lies in its ability to challenge traditional, paternalistic models of care where decisions are often made for individuals rather than with them. By placing control in the hands of the consumer, CILs foster independence, self-advocacy, and systems change, ensuring that services are not only responsive but also respectful of individual preferences and lived experiences.



Be Prepared!

Disability spans all demographics, impacting individuals in both visible and invisible ways. For people with disabilities and their families, emergency preparedness requires careful planning tailored to individual needs. Key steps include staying informed

about potential disasters, creating a support network, and preparing for medical, transportation, and communication needs. Strategies include keeping emergency supplies, planning for accessible transportation, and registering with local emergency management agencies for targeted assistance. It's essential to plan for service animals, assistive technologies, and disruptions to medical care, ensuring readiness to navigate emergencies safely and effectively. For more information on disaster preparedness, contact Ready.gov by phone at (800) 621-FEMA (3362) or on the web at <https://www.ready.gov/disability>



Did you get a new computer for the holidays? Our **Cyberpals program** places donated, refurbished computers into the homes of local people with disabilities and we are always in need of donations. We gratefully accept donations of desktop computers, laptops, and most computer peripherals that are no greater than 10 years old. If you're interested in donating, **please call 828-298-1977 and ask for Marcos.**



Announcements & Schedules



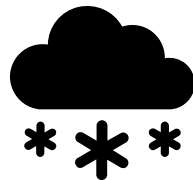
OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED UNTIL

JANUARY 2ND 2025



February
2025

Monthly 2nd Friday Social
Events Resume



Weather during the winter months can affect our hours of operation. Please make sure that you've spoken to one of us on the phone and confirmed we're open before visiting our office.



Season's Greetings!

This holiday season, let's celebrate the incredible diversity that makes our world so beautiful. For those of us living with disabilities or supporting loved ones who do, the holidays remind us of the power of community, the joy of connection, and the strength that lies in every unique journey.

May this season bring warmth, accessibility, and kindness to all. May we continue to create spaces where everyone feels seen, valued, and celebrated—not just during the holidays, but every day.

Here's to love, resilience, and the magic of the season. Wishing you peace, joy, and an abundance of moments that make your heart smile.

With warmest wishes,

Eva, Lexi & Marcos

***TO REQUEST A PRINTED COPY PLEASE MAKE CALL US AT
(828)298-1977***



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PARTNERS
Your Pathway to Independent Living

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<https://www.facebook.com/DisabilityPartners>

