

ELIZABETH A. PEARCE
STATE TREASURER

RETIREMENT DIVISION
TEL: (802) 828-2305
FAX: (802) 828-5182



UNCLAIMED PROPERTY DIVISION
TEL: (802) 828-2407

ACCOUNTING DIVISION
TEL: (802) 828-2301
FAX: (802) 828-2884

STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE STATE TREASURER

TO: Vermont ABLE Task Force and Disability Advocates

FROM: Tim Lueders-Dumont, Policy Director, Office of the Vermont State Treasurer
Kirsten Murphy, Executive Director, Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council

RE: Vermont Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Implementation

DATE: August 19, 2016

You are receiving this invitation because of your interest and work in supporting Vermonters with disabilities.

The Treasurer's Office, in partnership with the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council, will host a meeting to discuss the next steps to implement a Vermont ABLE Savings Program.

- The meeting will take place on: **September 23rd at 10am in the 4th Floor Executive Conference Room of 109 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05609.**

Please email (Tim.Lueders-Dumont@Vermont.Gov) or Kirsten Murphy (Kirsten.Murphy@Vermont.Gov) with any questions. Also, please email Tim.Lueders-Dumont@Vermont.Gov to RSVP.

Since Vermont does not have funding appropriated for operating an ABLE program, the most efficient option will likely be a partnership with an existing ABLE program. Several states have opened programs in the past few months. We will review the different available options at the September 23rd meeting and discuss next steps.

The ABLE National Resource Center's Webinar, "A Closer Look at the New ABLE Programs," is linked here: <http://www.ablenrc.org/sites/default/files/docs/events/ABLE%20Programs%20Webinar.pdf>. This presentation gives a broad overview of ABLE. The webinar also provides an overview of states that have already implemented national programs.

The ABLE National Resource Center's State Review webpage is linked here: <http://ablenrc.org/state-review>. For an overview of each state that currently provides an ABLE program, click on the states in blue. Ohio, Nebraska, and Tennessee currently offer ABLE programs nationwide. Florida provides an ABLE program that is limited to Florida residents.

For more information about work in Vermont, please visit the Vermont's ABLE Task Force webpage, linked here: <http://www.vermonttreasurer.gov/reports/ABLE-task-force>

Please see the next page for a timeline and further details.

Vermont Timeline for ABLE
“Achieving a Better Life Experience”

December 2014: Congress passes the Federal ABLE Act allowing states to adopt their own enabling legislation in compliance with IRS/SSA Code.

May 2015: Vermont Legislature passes enabling ABLE Legislation—allowing the Office of the State Treasurer to implement a program. No dollars are appropriated for the program.

May-December 2015: Office of the State Treasurer convenes the Vermont ABLE Task Force to study ABLE implementation. The Task Force meets five times and drafts a report with a status update and recommendations to amend the current ABLE law in Vermont to allow for the State Treasurer to contract with other states. Vermont ABLE Task Force creates webpage: <http://www.vermonttreasurer.gov/reports/ABLE-task-force>

December 2015: The Federal PATH Act is signed into law and eliminates the residency requirement for qualified ABLE programs. The passage of the PATH Act allows for individuals to use ABLE programs located in a state of which they are not a resident.

January 2016: The Vermont ABLE Task Force produces first Legislative report:
<http://www.vermonttreasurer.gov/reports/ABLE-task-force>

May 2016: Vermont’s enabling ABLE legislation, passed in 2015, is amended to reflect the recommendations of the Vermont ABLE Task Force. The Office of the State Treasurer produces an ABLE update:
http://www.vermonttreasurer.gov/sites/treasurer/files/pdf/misc/2016_26_MAY_ABLE_final_update.pdf

June 2016: Office of the Vermont State Treasurer and the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council convenes a meeting in Vermont of New England states that includes disability organizations, 529 Administrators, and Treasurer’s Offices to discuss ABLE implementation, partnerships, and concerns of potential participants.

January-August 2016: Office of the State Treasurer, Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council, and Green Mountain Self-Advocates, investigate and conduct interviews of potential partner states.

September 2016: The Vermont ABLE Task Force convenes a meeting with organizations that support Vermonters with disabilities to discuss options, next steps, and implementation.

2017: Vermont ABLE implementation is expected, pending final exploration of available options and given resource constraints.

NOTE: Both IRS and SSA state guidance regarding ABLE has not been finalized as of 8/19/16; however, four states have already started ABLE programs: OH, TN, NE, and FL. OH, TN, and NE are available nationally (including to Vermonters).

Helpful Resources:

- ABLE National Resource Center’s Webinar: “A Closer Look at the New ABLE Programs”:
<http://www.ablenrc.org/sites/default/files/docs/events/ABLE%20Programs%20Webinar.pdf>
- ABLE National Resource Center’s State Review webpage: <http://ablenrc.org/state-review>.
- Vermont’s ABLE Task Force webpage is linked here: <http://www.vermonttreasurer.gov/reports/ABLE-task-force>