

PENNSYLVANIA REHABILITATION COUNCIL (PaRC)

Office Location / Mailing Address: 55 Utley Drive, Camp Hill, PA 17011
Voice: (717) 975-2004 or (888) 250-5175 TTY: (717) 737-0158 Fax: (888) 524-9282
Email: racucpa@ucpcentralpa.org www.parac.org

WEEKLY UPDATE: March 25, 2020

If you no longer wish to receive this update, please contact Jill Kovalcik Weaver at jill.weaver@ucpcentralpa.org to have your name removed.

NOTE: This update is for informational purposes only. The PaRC and Support Staff are not responsible for the accuracy of this information. Some of the information found in this update you may have already received from another source. The PaRC or the Support Staff do not use this update as a vehicle to express their views and positions. As of **March 25, 2020**, all links have been verified. Please credit the PaRC Support Project for any information forwarded to others. Thank You.

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of the Council is to inform and advise the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Legislature, and the Governor on the diverse issues affecting employment of people with disabilities.

The PaRC 2019 Annual Report can be found on our webpage or by clicking on the following link

<http://parac.org/reports/2019AnnualReport.pdf>

Find Your Local CAC Meeting Dates: Please go to our website www.parac.org and click on the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) link to find dates, locations, times, etc. for information on the nearest CAC.

***** PaRC Calendar Year 2020 –Please Mark your Calendars *****

FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS

PaRC Full Council meetings will be held at the **Harrisburg Hilton** from 9:30 AM until 3:30 PM (unless otherwise noted). We will also have parking passes for those who park in the Strawberry Square Parking Garage. Please plan to stay for the entire meeting.

**May 13, 2020
August 5, 2020
November 18, 2020**

The agenda will be posted on the PaRC website.

http://parac.org/council_mtgs.html

PaRC Member Committee Conference Calls – Please Mark your Calendars

CareerLink/WIOA

Next Call: To be Determined

Executive Committee Conference Call

Next Call: To be Determined

Legislative and Public Awareness Conference Call

Next Call: To be Determined

OVR Policy and State Plan Committee / Customer Satisfaction Conference Call

Next Call: Friday, March 27, 2020 at 9:30 AM

Social Media/Outreach Committee Conference Call

Next Call: To be Determined

Transition & Education

Next Call: Thursday, April 9, 2020 at 2:00 PM

Ad Hoc Celebration Rehab Act/ADA

Next Call: Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 3:00 PM

The PaRC Social Media and Outreach Committee in partnership with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) produced 6 videos, 5 of which are OVR individual and business success stories, as well as a PaRC Recruitment video. We want to thank both the individuals and companies that participated in making these videos and OVR for supporting the project. The PaRC is pleased to present the following 6 videos. Please feel free to share.

[PaRC Recruitment](#)

[PaRC Dream Partnership](#)

[PaRC Herr Foods Inc.](#)

[PaRC Aha Moment](#)

[PaRC Keystone Blind Association](#)

[PaRC Assistive Technology](#)

PaRC COUNCIL OPENINGS: The PaRC is looking for a candidate to fill the veteran with a disability opening. The openings for Deaf and Hard of

Hearing and General Advocacy are pending as candidates have been sent forward for the Governor's approval. If interested, please go to our website (www.parac.org) and fill out an application.

1.) From Disability Scoop Social Security Closes Offices Nationwide

by Shaun Heasley | March 19, 2020

Social Security offices are closing their doors due to coronavirus, but help with benefits is still available, the agency says.

The Social Security Administration said this week that its local offices across the nation are now closed to the public for in-person service. To read the entire article visit: <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/19/social-security-closes-offices-nationwide/28004/>

New Group To Help Crime Victims With Disabilities

by Rita Price, The Columbus Dispatch/TNS | March 20, 2020

COLUMBUS, Ohio — When people with disabilities become victims of crime, neglect or other maltreatment, investigations can easily fall short.

Many victims cannot communicate easily or even verbally. Those who receive assistance from multiple caregivers are sometimes told the suspect list is too long. To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/20/new-group-help-crime-victims-disabilities/28010/>

For Kids With Autism, School Shutdown Poses Even Bigger Quandary

by Gordon Rago, The Virginian-Pilot/TNS | March 20, 2020

SUFFOLK, Va. — It was the first morning schools were closed for the coronavirus pandemic, and Nick Goodwin had bitten his bottom lip.

His bus was supposed to arrive at 8:15. Nick knew that, because he knows his schedule and likes to go outside and ride the bus from his Suffolk home to Mack Benn Elementary. To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/20/for-kids-autism-school-shutdown-poses-quandary/28014/>

Coronavirus Stimulus Plan Could Weaken Protections For Students With Disabilities

by Michelle Diamant | March 20, 2020

Lawmakers are considering waiving portions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as schools nationwide struggle in the face of COVID-19.

Buried within a [proposal](#) put forth Thursday by U.S. Senate Republicans is a provision directing Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to prepare a report to Congress outlining any special education obligations that she thinks school districts should be temporarily freed from. To read the entire article visit: Lawmakers are considering waiving portions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as schools nationwide struggle in the face of COVID-19. To read the entire article visit:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/20/coronavirus-stimulus-plan-could-weaken-protections-for-students-with-disabilities/28019/>

Feds Clarify Special Ed Guidance For School Closures

by Michelle Diament | March 24, 2020

Troubled that some districts were choosing not to educate students at all because of special education concerns, the U.S. Department of Education is rethinking its advice to schools.

With a [fact sheet](#) released over the weekend, the Education Department said it is seeking to address a "serious misunderstanding." To read the entire article visit: <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/24/feds-clarify-special-ed-guidance-for-school-closures/28033/>

2.) Forwarded from Passle Helminski From Disability Rights PA

This is not a drill!

Congress Using COVID-19 to Strip Students with Disabilities of Access to Education

Republicans in Congress want to give Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos unprecedented power to strip rights from students with disabilities and those who need supports to prepare for work under the IDEA and Rehab Act. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act asks Secretary DeVos to provide Congress with a report of any additional waivers the Secretary believes should be enacted into law. **These waivers could allow schools to opt out of providing free appropriate public education to students with disabilities** in the least restrictive environment, cancel individualized education plans, remove procedural safeguards, and much more. To read the entire article visit:

<https://disabilityrightspa.salsalabs.org/CovidSPEDAction/index.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=f565796b-c088-4aa5-9359-2589630689a9>

Forwarded from Passle Helminski

From APSE

Tell Congress to Include PWD in COVID Relief Aid

By [karitietjen](#) | March 19, 2020 | Comments Off on Tell Congress to Include PWD in COVID Relief Aid

Throughout the weekend, Congress has been working on the 3rd COVID-19 relief package. Once again, the current draft excludes people with disabilities and it is vital that they hear about the needs of people with disabilities and the service system that supports them to live and work in their communities!

**Tell Congress to include people with disabilities
and their direct supports
in the next COVID-19 relief package!**

To read the entire article visit: <https://apse.org/tell-congress-to-include-pwd-in-covid-relief-aid/>

**3.) From the National Organization on Disability
Living with a Visual Disability during the Coronavirus Pandemic |
Blog by NOD's Charles Catherine**

March 20, 2020 | By Charles Catherine, Special Assistant, NOD I am standing in my grocery store, waiting for Willy, one of the workers who usually helps me to do my shopping. As I reach out and grab his familiar shoulder, I realize that something has changed, I'm reluctant to touch him. To read the entire article visit: <https://www.nod.org/news-and-events/>

**4.) From the American Federation of the Blind (AFB)
American Foundation for the Blind Applauds House Introduction of
Disability Access to Transportation Act**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 19, 2020)—The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) applauds Representative Jim Langevin, along with co-sponsors Representative Dina Titus and Representative John Katko, for their introduction of the Disability Access to Transportation Act, which would expand and improve transportation, especially paratransit programs, for people with disabilities.

One of the most significant barriers to employment for Americans who are blind or low vision is a profound lack of affordable, efficient transportation options. At present, over half of working-aged blind and low vision Americans are not in the labor market, compared to only a quarter of Americans without disabilities. These individuals consistently identify transportation as the largest barrier to obtaining employment, accepting jobs that are offered to them, or remaining employed once they are hired.

To read the entire article visit: <https://www.afb.org/press-room/press-release-archive/applauds-house-intro-disability-access-transportation-act>

5.) From The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)

Over 90 Civil Rights Organizations Urge House and Senate Leadership to Address the Needs of People with Disabilities in COVID-19 Relief Package

For Immediate Release: March 21, 2020

Contact: Keri Gray, (202) 521-4310, kgray@aapd.com

Washington, D.C. – The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and 92 disability and allied organizations have joined together to urge House and Senate leadership that the third COVID-19 relief package should address the needs of people with disabilities and their allies. People with disabilities are, and will be, particularly vulnerable as COVID-19 spreads across the country, facing high risk of complications and death if exposed to the outbreak and needing to isolate themselves for protection. To read the entire article visit: <https://www.aapd.com/press-releases/civil-rights-letter-covid-19/>

6.) From the National Council on Disability (NCD) Latest NCD News

March 24, 2020

NCD CMS COVID-19 letter

March 18, 2020

NCD COVID-19 letter to HHS OCR

March 18, 2020

NCD letter to White House regarding Taskforce interpreters

March 18, 2020

NCD CAP recommendations letter

March 18, 2020

NCD CIO recommendation letter

March 16, 2020

NCD cancellations due to COVID-19

To read these articles go to: <https://www.ncd.gov/>

7.) From AVIATIONPROS

New Airline Seat Design Will Allow Disabled Passengers to Fly in Their Own Wheelchairs Molon Labe Seating

Mar 19th, 2020

Molon Labe Seating of Denver, Colorado has unveiled a prototype of a new airline seat that will allow Passengers of Restricted Mobility (PRM's) to fly on airlines in their own wheelchairs.

The Problem

Currently passengers in wheelchairs can't fly in them. They must transfer from their wheelchair into a Skychair to get down the narrow aisle and then

transfer again into their airline seat. To read the entire article go to: <https://www.aviationpros.com/engines-components/aircraft-airframe-accessories/interiors/press-release/21130472/molon-labe-seating-new-airline-seat-design-will-allow-disabled-passengers-to-fly-in-their-own-wheelchairs>

8.) From Disabled World

U.S. Medicare and Telehealth Services During COVID-19 Pandemic

Author: Disabled World

Contact : www.disabled-world.com

Published: 2020-03-22

Due to COVID-19 Medicare temporarily expands coverage of telehealth services, including evaluation and management visits, mental health counseling and preventive health screenings. To read the entire article visit: <https://www.disabled-world.com/medical/ehealth/telehealth-medicare.php>

9.) From the US Department of Education

Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)

Urging States to Continue Educating Students with Disabilities, Secretary DeVos Publishes New Resource on Accessibility and Distance Learning Options

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 21, 2020

Contact: Press Office

(202) 401-1576 or press@ed.gov

New Fact Sheet Provides Additional Information on How Distance Learning Can be Used to Meet Students' Needs During COVID-19 National Emergency

WASHINGTON — U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced today the Department has released new information clarifying that federal law should not be used to prevent schools from offering distance learning opportunities to all students, including students with disabilities. This new resource from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) explains that as a school district takes necessary steps to address the health, safety, and well-being of all its students and staff, educators can use distance learning opportunities to serve all students. To read the entire article visit: <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/new-resource-accessibility-distance-learning-options-students-with-disabilities/>

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK! 