

ACT Center for Disability Leadership announces imminent program deadlines for Persons with Disabilities

Academy and Conference deadlines this week and a full explanation of a new business model for self-advocacy services

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, USA, April 20, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- 2 deadlines and a full



"This (new Minnesota Department of Human Services business model) changes the prospects for sustainability of services," says ACT Executive Director Mary Kay Kennedy."

Mary Kay Kennedy, ED, ACT Center for Disability Leadership

explanation of a new business model for self-advocacy services for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities

Advocating Change Together/ACT Center for Disability Leadership has two major deadlines for participants in its programs this week. In addition, the ACT Center is shifting its business model in response to the Minnesota Department of Human Services announcement of new opportunities for disability services.

Wednesday, April 20, is the deadline for registering for the 2022 State Self-Advocacy Conference. The event will be

held virtually on April 22-23 via Zoom.

Information and registration is available at [Self-Advocacy Conference link](#).

Also this week and next, five new Self-Advocacy Academy courses are starting. There are still openings in the courses for the 13-session programs. More information is available at [Self-Advocacy Academy link](#) and program manager Adam Ruff (ruff@selfadvocacy.org or (651) 641-0297) is available to answer questions and guide new participants in the registration process.

The Self-Advocacy Academy is the first program in the ACT Center's new business model which funds the courses through wavered funds from individuals with disabilities. An explanatory video ([MN-DHS Self-Advocacy Video link](#)) was launched last week, in which Natasha Merz, director of disability services at the Minnesota Department of Human Services, offers details of the new source for funding self-advocacy services.

Merz explains that self-advocacy service providers can now support their programs through

waiver service funds from individuals rather than from intermittent grants, donations and government appropriations.

“This changes the prospects for sustainability of services,” says ACT Executive Director Mary Kay Kennedy. Contact Mary Kay to learn more about how the ACT Center for Disability Leadership is updating its business model.

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BACKGROUND: St. Paul-based Advocating Change Together/ACT Center for Disability Leadership launched its Self-Advocacy Academy in January 2022. The 40+-year-old disability rights organization is currently registering participants for six courses that run from April into July.

The Academy is an ongoing program organized in three trimesters a year. Each trimester course consists of 13 two-hour weekly sessions. Courses are a mix of in person and distance learning formats.

Classes are facilitated by trained leaders and self-advocate co-leaders. Online classes are limited to eight students and in-person classes to 12. All participants have individual meetings with leaders between sessions to ensure that the program is meeting the needs of everyone.

The Self-Advocacy Academy has been approved by the Minnesota Department of Human Services for funding by Medicaid through the state’s waived services. That means persons with disabilities who qualify for waived service funds may use them to support their participation in the Academy.

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