



Bank of North Dakota

Bank of North Dakota launches ABLE Plan Resource Page

The state-owned Bank of North Dakota has launched an Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Plan resource page located at www.bnd.nd.gov/able. The ABLE Plan resource page is for families in North Dakota who want to learn more about ABLE savings accounts for individuals with disabilities and the states that offer plans that may be used. ABLE Plans allow for people with qualified disabilities to save up to \$14,000 annually for a variety of expenses with no impact to federally means-tested aid. Saving through an ABLE Plan account still allows access to their supports such as residential and vocational supports, health care access and family supports, which help them live in the community.

While the state of North Dakota will not offer its own ABLE Plan for residents, Bank of North Dakota is considered the administrator of the ND ABLE Plan, will maintain a resource page and stay informed of changes at the federal level.

A North Dakota plan will not be offered because the federal government changed the way residents may seek out an ABLE Plan. The new law allows residents of North Dakota to use any state or national plan that allows for out-of-state residents. These plans will be offered at a significantly reduced cost when compared to a plan North Dakota would have been able to support. There are currently three states that offer plans. All the same ABLE Plan benefits and opportunities to save, take qualified distributions and manage the accounts will be available through a variety of plan choices.

IMPORTANT: As outlined on the ND ABLE Plan resource page, and when assisting people with questions regarding ABLE Plans, be aware that public benefits which are subject to state means testing (versus federal means testing such as SSI) MAY BE impacted when opening an ABLE account through any state or national plan. Bank of North Dakota, with support of local disability organizations and ND Protection and Advocacy will seek “Do No Harm” legislation during the 2017 North Dakota Legislative Assembly to protect people’s state means tested aid in the same manner that federally means tested aid is protected. This was an oversight when the original state law was passed.

As identified by Department of Human Services the following are state means tested aid programs that you should be aware MAY suspended Aid if an ABLE account is opened by a person who receives this aid. Please have individuals contact the administrators of these programs about possible suspension of aid if they open an ABLE account prior to legislation being passed to protect residents:

- Service Payments to Elderly and Disabled (SPED) and Expanded SPED.
- Aid to the Blind Remedial Care
- Autism Voucher
- Substance Use Disorder Voucher
- Personal Needs Allowance for Individuals receiving SSI and receiving services in a long-term care setting
- Children’s Special Health Services

Thank you for using the resource page located at www.bnd.nd.gov/able and this email in better understanding the benefits ABLE offers, who is eligible, what states offer plans and the possible implications of using a plan.

For additional information please contact James Barnhardt, College SAVE & ABLE Plan Director at Bank of North Dakota at 701-328-5882 or email jbarnhardt@nd.gov.