



# ABLE 101 Part 6: ABLE Age Adjustment Act

## **What is the ABLE Age Adjustment Act? Why should you care about it?**

The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act allows some people with disabilities or their families to establish tax-free savings accounts that will not affect their eligibility for, or to remain on, government benefit programs.

Based on the current legislation, however, many individuals who develop or acquire a disability after the age of 26 are not eligible to open an ABLE account. The main reason for adding the age restriction was to reduce the costs associated with the enactment of the ABLE Act.

There have been efforts to increase the age restriction through introducing new legislation, starting with the 114th Congress in 2015.

The ABLE Age Adjustment Act, which would raise the current ABLE Act's age of disability onset from 26 to 46, was recently reintroduced in the 117th Congress (H.R.1219). If passed, it would allow many more individuals with disabilities to enroll in ABLE programs.

## **Why is it imperative that the ABLE Age Adjustment Act be passed by Congress?**

Despite the progressive efforts to empower individuals with disabilities through ABLE programs, many individuals are left out of the programs due to the age restrictions.

Many conditions and traumatic life events that lead to disabilities may occur later in life. In addition, many veterans are also unable to take advantage of this important savings tool.

Therefore, the enactment of the ABLE Age Adjustment Act is an important attempt to be less discriminative against individuals whose disability onset occurred after they turned 26. Enacting this bill will also make the ABLE programs sustainable by expanding the pool of individuals who can open



ABLE accounts and by effectively promoting financial independence and self-reliance to a wider population of the disability community.

Visit this link to see the full Senate bill (S.331) (<https://trackbill.com/bill/us-congress-senate-bill-331-able-age-adjustment-act/2045442/>).

## **What can you do to support the ABLE Age Adjustment Act?**

ABLE accounts allow many Americans with disabilities to save money to help cover qualified disability expenses without jeopardizing their eligibility for federal and state disability benefits.

Disability communities across the country play an important role in advocating for and accelerating the enactment of the ABLE Age Adjustment Act to include those millions of Americans who are currently unable to enroll in ABLE programs.

A critical first step in advocacy work is disseminating information about the ABLE Act and ABLE programs. Opening an ABLE account is a major step toward empowering individuals with disabilities, yet many of those qualified to sign up are still not familiar with the benefit.

Another important step is contacting your senator and representatives to ask them to sponsor the ABLE Age Adjustment Act (S.331 and H.R. 1219) to increase the availability of this valuable savings opportunity to people who acquired their disabilities after the age of 26.

The National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) provides a toolkit for advocacy outreach to Members of Congress and the media (<https://nast.org/able-act/>).