



A Maryland ABLE account can be a useful tool for helping people with intellectual disabilities to finance their college experience. With a Maryland ABLE account, students and their families are able to save up to \$100,000 for college and other expenses without impacting state and federal means-tested benefits such as SSI, Medicaid and other waivers. Funds in the ABLE account are not included as investments for parents or the student when completing the FASFA. Maryland ABLE account holders benefit from tax-deferred account growth and tax-free withdrawals for qualified disability expenses (QDEs) that support them in their independence and pursuit of a better life experience. For ABLE account holders who choose the pathway to college, funds in their ABLE account could be used to pay for college and other qualified expenses that support them in their learning. Examples of qualified disability expenses may include but are not limited to:

- Tuition
- Books, class supplies and adaptations to course materials
- Housing costs (dorm and dorm furnishings, student meal plan,
- Tutors
- Support staff (personal care attendant or support aid)
- Transportation (taxi, Uber/Lyft, adaptive vehicle expenses)
- Assistive technology ( computer, screen reader, recording equipment, cell phone)

#### **Additional benefits for the student:**

- As the owner and beneficiary of the ABLE account, you have a choice on how the money in your account is saved, spent or invested. You can manage your own assets online or designate someone you trust to be your authorized legal representative (ALR) who can help you make financial decisions.
- The ability to save for college, save and invest in a tax-advantaged account and prepare for the future without the fear of losing benefits such as SSI and Medicaid.
- Personalize an online gifting page through your ABLE Account for family and friends who may want to support your college experience with a contribution to your ABLE account.

- Use the Pre-paid card option for easy access to ABLE account funds. No need to carry cash as the Maryland ABLE pre-paid card can be used online and most everywhere that credit cards are accepted.

### **Benefits for the Family:**

- Families are able to set aside money for college for their sons and daughters with disabilities just as they might do for their other children.
- Parents, family members, and friends with Maryland taxable income who contribute to a Maryland ABLE account can access a Maryland State income tax deduction up to \$2,500 per contributor, per ABLE Account (\$5,000 for contributors who are married and filing joint).
- Families can rollover funds from a 529 college savings account to an ABLE account up to annual contribution limits each year for eligible beneficiaries. Funds rolled over to an ABLE account have more flexibility as they can be used for a wider variety of qualified-disability expenses. In addition to paying for college, funds can be used for any qualified expense that supports the ABLE account holder in his or her health, independence, or quality of life.
- Families can continue to contribute to the ABLE account beyond the college experience and use it as a financial planning tool that compliments a Special Needs Trust (SNT) or as alternative to a SNT.

### **Benefits for Institutes of Higher Education:**

- Maryland ABLE can partner with the college or university's disability services department to provide resource materials and presentations to staff and students about using an ABLE account to pay for college and other learning-related disability expenses.

To learn more about Maryland ABLE and how an ABLE account can be used to support students with qualified disabilities in their college experience as well as in promoting their personal choice, independence and financial stability, visit [www.marylandable.org](http://www.marylandable.org). For further information please email us at [questions@marylandable.org](mailto:questions@marylandable.org) or contact our customer support team at 1.855.563.2253 (TTY) 1.844.888.2253.