

MiABLE opened November 1

Michigan became the fifth state to open a savings program for people with disabilities on November 1, 2016. The MiABLE (Michigan Achieving a Better Life Experience) program allows qualified individuals who become disabled before the age of 26 to save up to \$14,000 a year in a tax preferred savings account. Tax preferred means that qualified distributions are not taxed. ABLE accounts provide self-empowerment and improved quality of life for people with disabilities and their families by allowing them to save and supplement disability- related expenses such as personal support services, housing and education.

Individuals receiving public benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid, are only allowed a maximum of \$2,000 in assets. Similar to special needs trust accounts, the ABLE accounts may allow individual to save money and not jeopardize their eligibility for public programs such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid.

The maximum allowed in a MiABLE account is \$500,000. If the account exceeds \$100,000, the beneficiary's Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is suspended, however, they may remain eligible for Medicaid. Funds remaining in the account upon the death of the participant will go to the state to repay the individual's Medicaid costs.

MiABLE has an annual fee of \$45 as well as a low asset-based investment fee between 0.5 and 0.78 percent depending on the account investment option.

There are five different investment options available for MiABLE accounts ranging from Conservative to All Stock Aggressive. Debit cards are expected to become available February 1, 2017.

The feature that sets the MiABLE program apart from other ABLE programs (currently offered in Ohio, Tennessee, Nebraska and Florida) is the public profile option. Participants may choose to create a public profile that friends and family can make contributions to. The public profiles are available and searchable on the MiABLE website. Anyone may contribute to an individual's public profile account.

For more information on ABLE accounts or to enroll in MiABLE go to www.miable.org.