



GROWING STRONGER: ENVISION UNLIMITED & UCP SEGUIN OF GREATER CHICAGO

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Envision Unlimited and United Cerebral Palsy Seguin of Greater Chicago are entering into a strategic partnership that will create a stronger advocate for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and those with mental illness. Working together, we will be able to expand services, serve more people and achieve greater effectiveness.

Jointly, we will be an even greater champion to improve the lives of those we serve. Our aim: to drive innovation that leads to better opportunities for our members, creates collaborative systems and promotes improved public policy. Our work enables people to live life without limits.

1. What's this all about?

Envision Unlimited and UCP Seguin are forming a strategic partnership that consolidates key aspects of our organizations to enhance our overall efficiency and benefit those we serve. Mostly, this means consolidating administrative functions such as accounting and finance, information technology, quality assurance, planning and strategy, facility management, as well as development, marketing and communications. It is important to note that the consolidation will provide additional support for those we serve and for staff.

We have three overarching goals:

1. Achieve greater administrative efficiencies that will enable us to enhance our services;
2. Become more innovative to provide those we serve with more choice, independence, and opportunities to enjoy activities and be fully included within the larger society;
3. Leverage our larger size and efficiencies as benefits to funders and policymakers.

2. Is this a merger?

This is not a merger. We are creating a strategic partnership that will include combining administrative functions into a third nonprofit in order to reduce administrative redundancies, enable new efficiencies, increase effectiveness and provide better support to Envision Unlimited and UCP Seguin staff and the direct services they provide.

Envision and UCP Seguin will be partners, or “affiliates” of this new administrative entity. Within this federation structure, each organization will retain its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status and its board of directors. Each will continue to deliver the highest quality direct services possible while sharing a single mission, strategic direction, brand and back office.

3. What are the benefits of creating this partnership?

We will serve more people. Within the next three years, we plan to serve 500 to 1,000 more people who need our support.

Beyond the greater numbers, we will serve people better because we will be more specialized, more comprehensive, and more innovative. We will achieve these results through several actions:

- Creating a broader array of living options through technology
- Helping people live more independently in alternatives to CILA group homes (Community Integrated Living Arrangements)
- Integrating daily community opportunities for everyone receiving day support
- Developing community employment for more people
- Ensuring that more people with mental illness have ready access to recovery services
- Significantly increasing our geographic footprint, which means we can offer services to individuals and families closer to family homes and offer more choices to persons served

4. What are the similarities and differences between Envision Unlimited and UCP Seguin?

Both organizations are well-respected in the disability community, known for high quality programs and have been established for decades. Chicago-based Envision Unlimited, founded in 1948, operates homes, day centers and therapeutic programs. Similarly, Cicero-based UCP Seguin has served individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) since 1949.

Geographically, Envision’s mental health service area spans Cook County. I/DD services are offered in the Chicagoland area (Chicago, north and south suburbs and Will County) and in-home respite is offered in the 18 Central Illinois counties. UCP Seguin provides I/DD services in West and Southern Cook County, the City of Chicago, DuPage County and adjacent counties. Infinitec, a UCP Seguin assistive technology and online training initiative, serves tens of thousands of students and professionals in Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota and Pennsylvania.

Program overlap includes:

- I/DD Employment services
- Residential services, including Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILA)
- Community Day Services (CDS)
- Social enterprises
- Foster Care for Children with Disabilities
- Behavior Analysis Services
- Respite Services

Program differences include:

- Community mental health (Envision only)
- Residential mental health (Envision only)
- Mental health employment (Envision only)
- Compliance training and augmentative technology support (UCP Seguin only)
- Health services (Envision only)

We will be able to work more efficiently and effectively together. This partnership presents an opportunity to leverage each organization's services to improve the quality of life for all participants.

5. Why are you choosing to do this now?

Public policy has long ignored the needs of the people we serve, resulting in systems and practices that haven't changed in decades. The pandemic and the ensuing global recession have worsened this situation. If we want to innovate and create better opportunities for persons served, we have to collaborate on a large scale.

For years, Envision Unlimited, UCP Seguin, and our peer organizations have confronted four major industry and societal challenges and their long-term impact:

1. Healthcare policy/systems
2. Managed care contracting (while this was intended to achieve the dual goals of controlling health care costs and managing quality of care, it can reduce support for chronically underfunded services such as I/DD services and mental health services)
3. Racial, gender, income, and other social inequities
4. Industry consolidation that could provoke additional revenue cuts

6. What is the timeline for these changes?

The partnership between Envision Unlimited and UCP Seguin will become effective July 1, 2021. The first half of 2021 will be spent planning and implementing the most important changes—and more importantly, to get them right.

7. What will the big changes be?

You will see several major changes during the next six months, including:

- New name and brand - Both affiliates will adopt a new name that reflects the new federation's brand. (Please note: It will take a few months to complete this process.)
- A CEO change - Mark McHugh, President and CEO of Envision Unlimited, will become the CEO of the new federation, Envision, and UCP Seguin. UCP Seguin President and CEO John Voit will semi-retire and assist with fundraising, after a long and highly productive career.
- Each affiliate will have an Executive Director who will focus on service implementation and maintaining a high level of program quality:
 - Colleen Rosa for Envision Unlimited
 - Joseph Mengoni for UCP Seguin

- Creation of an Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to ensure that our internal policies and those for which we advocate externally work for everyone. This new function will be led by Betty Jackson, currently Envision Unlimited's Chief Operating Officer.
- Creation of a Chief of Staff position that will manage a number of administrative departments. Michelle Sanders, currently UCP Seguin's Vice President of Organizational Management, will fill that role.

8. Where will my donations go?

If your longstanding devotion is to Envision Unlimited, be assured that you can continue to earmark your contributions to support Envision programs. You can also be confident that any donation to the organization will be a wise investment – a contribution that can be leveraged to strengthen both affiliate organizations, enabling us to have a greater, more positive impact on the lives of the individuals we serve than ever before.

9. Is the federation structure common in the human services sector?

Many nonprofit organizations across the country and the world have adopted the federation model. Among them: Boys and Girls Clubs of Chicago, YMCA, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and Red Cross. In the Chicago area, for example, the Keystone Alliance provides I/DD services. It is federation that includes affiliates Search, Inc. and Glenkirk. Each is unique in the way it organizes and executes its operations.

10. Will Envision Unlimited staff move to UCP Seguin and vice-versa?

No. Staff members will remain employed by their current affiliate and their workplaces will not change. If they provide direct service or manage direct service, there will be hardly any effect. With rare exception, employees will have the same supervisor, management structure, and work in the same homes, day centers, therapeutic programs, etc.

Employees who work in administrative departments will move to the new administrative organization.

11. Will there be a change in administrative offices?

Not at this time. Over the next several months, we will look at the space we both currently use to see if we can save money by consolidating space. There are many factors to consider, and it will take some time to do such an analysis.

For questions or discussion, please contact:

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