

## **Vaccine Access for People with Disabilities: Guidance, Funding, Strategies and Best Practices**

Administration for Community Living:

Alison Barkoff, Acting Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

Robinsue Frohboese, Acting Director

John Wodatch, Senior Disability Adviser (Contractor)

Eileen Hanrahan, Senior Disability Adviser (Contractor)

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## **Select Biden-Harris Administration Priorities**

- Provide clear, consistent, evidence-based guidance for how communities should navigate the pandemic
- Plan for the effective, equitable distribution of treatments and vaccines
- Protect older Americans and others at high risk
- Support America's Caregivers
- Bolster Long-term Services and Supports, including Home and Community Based Services

## Office for Civil Rights Guidance Throughout COVID-19

- OCR Website: <https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-providers/civil-rights-covid19/index.html>
- Covers: Nondiscrimination on the basis of disability, age, race, color, national origin
- Areas addressed include:
  - Crisis Standards of Care
  - Accessibility for individuals with a disability or limited English proficiency
  - Hospital visitation
  - Vaccination
  - Resources from HHS and other Federal agencies

## **New Resources on Access to COVID Vaccinations for People with Disabilities**

- New Legal Guidance outlines legal standards prohibiting disability discrimination and provides concrete examples of the application of the standards in COVID-19 vaccination programs.
  - <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/federal-legal-standards-prohibiting-disability-discrimination-covid-19-vaccination.pdf>.
- New Fact Sheet sets out specific steps for covered entities to consider to promote compliance with the legal standards and equal access to the vaccine for people with disabilities.
  - <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/disability-access-vaccine-distribution.pdf>.

## **Key Actions Based on the Guidance and Fact Sheet**

- Eliminate discriminatory administrative barriers
  - Registration, scheduling, communication processes, paperwork requirements
- Ensure effective communication and provide auxiliary aids and services
  - Accessibility of website for making appointments, accessibility of process to individuals who use assistive technology
- Provide reasonable modifications
  - Social distancing requirements, assistance of a support person, use of a mask
- Ensure program access
  - Curbside vaccinations, home visits, alternative accessible sites, transportation

### **ACL Priorities**

- Vaccine allocation and administration;
- Protecting the lives of people with disabilities and older adults who live in congregate settings;
- Ensuring older adults and people with disabilities are not discriminated against in getting lifesaving care;
- Advocating for the needs of the workforce – including volunteers and families – who provides services and supports;
- Helping people remain safely in, and transition back to, the community; and
- Supporting our networks, which provide critical services to millions of people, *AND* expanded services during the pandemic.

## **Almost \$100 Million to Support National Vaccination Efforts**

- \$5 million for national hotline
- \$50 million - State Units on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging
- \$26 million - Aging and Disability Resource Centers
- \$5 million - Centers for Independent Living that receive federal funding directly from ACL.
- \$4 million – Protection and Advocacy systems
- \$4 million – State Councils on Developmental Disabilities
- \$4 million – University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

## **Strategies and Best Practices Document**

- Creative approaches to outreach and education.
- Tips on appointment facilitation.
- Ensuring website and vaccination site accessibility.
- Strategies for reaching people who cannot be vaccinated outside of their homes.
- Many examples of how the aging and disability network have collaborated with state agencies at virtually every stage of the vaccination process to ensure access for people with disabilities and older adults.
- Centered on racial equity – with must be part of every plan across agencies, policies, and programs.





## **Additional Questions?**

### **Contact Us:**

**ACL:** [aclinfo@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:aclinfo@acl.hhs.gov)

**OCR:** [OCRMail@hhs.gov](mailto:OCRMail@hhs.gov)