



**THE PARTNERSHIP**  
FOR INCLUSIVE DISASTER STRATEGIES

Mitigating Disability Bias in Vaccine Distribution for  
Washington State:

# Supporting People to Register and Receive Vaccinations

[www.disasterstrategies.org](http://www.disasterstrategies.org)

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# Accessibility for this Presentation

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# Welcome & About Us

# Disclaimer

Material presented does not constitute legal advice and is for informational purposes only. If you are seeking legal advice, please contact a qualified attorney.



# This Presentation is an Overview

This presentation is a summary of obligations of vaccine sites, and a few of many scenarios surrounding people with disabilities receiving vaccines.



# Ground Rules

- Maintain confidentiality
- Ask questions
- Have fun!!!



# Overview of the Modules

- **May 5: Supporting People to Register and Receive Vaccinations**
- **May 19:** What On-Site Staff, Vaccinators, and Volunteers Need to Know about Disability Bias
- **June 2:** Strategies for Reducing Trauma at Vaccine Sites
- **June 16:** Navigating the Vaccination Process as a Disabled and Multiply-Marginalized Disabled Person
- **June 30:** Peer Support: Ensuring Disabled and Multiply-Marginalized Disabled People Who Want Vaccines Get Vaccinated





# Today's Objectives

For you to have a better understanding of:

- Accommodations that may be needed by people with disabilities to register for vaccines
- Strategies for positive interactions with people with disabilities registering for vaccines



# Laws that Protect Disabled People's Rights in the Vaccine Process

The entire vaccination process must be accessible to disabled people under:

- The Rehabilitation Act (Rehab Act) when federal dollars are involved
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)



# Vaccination Process Must be Accessible to People with Disabilities

Includes:

- **Making an appointment online, by phone, and in person**
- Checking in for the vaccine
- Waiting in line for the vaccine
- Receiving the vaccine
- Waiting after vaccination



## What is the Goal?

Getting vaccinations to everyone with a disability who wants one in a way that is accessible.

## What is NOT a Goal

A vaccine-seeker not register for a vaccine because they were afraid, intimidated, confused or overwhelmed.



# Why are We Talking About Vaccine Registration Now?

- This is a fluid process.
- Not everyone is vaccinated.
- Callers will be registering for vaccines at home.
- Booster shots in the near future.
- Everyone over the age of 16 is qualified to receive the vaccine!



# Some Legal Obligations

- Registration process must be accessible
- Website must be screen reader compatible
  - [WCAG 2.1 guidelines](#) can be used



# What Do We Mean by Bias?

- Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.
- Often bias is unconscious or implicit



# What is Unconscious Bias?

Biases that we have and act upon that we are not aware





# Intersectionality

BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and other multiply marginalized people with disabilities experience disproportionate bias, ableism, and discrimination.



# Unconscious Bias Can Lead to Microaggressions

“Microaggressions are the “everyday slight, put down, indignity, or invalidation unintentionally directed toward a marginalized group.”

– Dr. Derald Sue, Professor of Psychology and Education



# What are Microaggressions?

Examples:

- Tone
  - Tone policing
  - Patronizing tone
  - Infantilizing tone
- Word choice
  - Using language that expresses bias



# Language

## **Refer to people with disabilities or disabled people**

Avoid language that presupposes the negative

- Victim of...
- Suffering from...

Avoid language that groups people

- The mentally ill
- The disabled



# Language

## Avoid “endearing” terms

- Honey
- Sweetie
- Dear

## Avoid infantilizing terms

- Mamma
- Baby





**Questions?**



# Disability Etiquette

# Disability Etiquette

Let's go over some scenarios to help us strategize ways to interact with people with disabilities without bias.







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# Scenario:

A person calls whose speech is slurred and you have difficulty understanding them. You think you hear the word “vaccine.”

What do you do?

# Strategies for Interacting with People with Speech Disabilities

## Try:

- Asking the person to repeat themselves.
  - They know that they have a speech disability.
- Asking them if they can text, if text/SMS is an option.
- Ask the disabled person's permission to invite a third person to assist if needed.



# Strategies for Interacting with People with Speech Disabilities

## Never:

- Pretend to understand
- Assume that the person is drunk or under the influence of narcotics
- Assume the person has an intellectual or other disabilities
- Speak in a tone that you might use with a child



# Strategies for Interacting with People with Speech Disabilities

## **Never:**

- Rush the person through the process without answering their question(s)
  - This is always disrespectful and could be dangerous
- Hang up without closure



# Strategies for Interacting with People with Speech Disabilities

## **Always:**

- Communicate to the person with the speech disability that you will figure this out.
- Seek out members of your team who may be able to help when needed.





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# Scenario:

A blind person calls and requests assistance with making an appointment for a vaccination.

How do you respond??



**Questions?**



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# Scenario:

You receive a call from a video relay operator saying they are interpreting for a Deaf person.

How do you interact with the interpreter?



## *Interacting with relay operators*

- Speak as if the interpreter is not there
- Indicate when you have finished a statement
- Allow time for interpreter





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# Scenario:

A caller seems to be hard of hearing and communication is difficult.

How do you proceed interacting with this caller?

# Strategies for Interacting with People who are Hard of Hearing

## Try:

- Repeating yourself
- Asking them if you can text, if text/SMS is an option
- Asking the caller's permission to invite a third person to assist if needed



# Assisting a Disabled Person in Accessing the Vaccine Process

They may or may not need:

- An appointment
- Transportation
- Accommodations at the site



# Assisting a Disabled Person in Getting Vaccinated

They may need accommodations including:

- Sign language interpreters or VRI at site
- Material in accessible format
- Peer support
- Material in plain language
- A low stimulation environment
- To advance in line



# Home Vaccination

Some callers with disabilities will be eligible for vaccination in their home.

<https://redcap.doh.wa.gov/surveys/?s=WCML4WRWXK>



# Home Vaccination

Home vaccinations can be given to people who are “homebound.”

- Eligibility criteria for “homebound” are imprecise because few, if any people are unable to leave their homes.



# Homebound

People might seek vaccinations at home because they

- Are immunocompromised
- Are overstimulated by vaccination environments
- Find vaccination environments very threatening
- Need to be at home in case they have an adverse reaction





# Homebound

- Live in an inaccessible home that is difficult for them to leave
- Have bariatric conditions that make it difficult for them to leave home
- Are unable to leave their home due to mental health conditions



# Current WA Homebound Eligibility

Is the individual able go out of the home with support or do they need vaccination in the home?

\* must provide value

- Can leave the home, but needs transportation
- Limited ability to leave the home and no access to transportation
- Unable to leave the home due to behavioral support needs
- Unable to leave the home due to medical support needs
- Unable to leave the home for other reasons. Please explain below.

reset

Is there anything else you would like us to know?

Comments

Expand



# Current WA Homebound Eligibility

**Is the individual able go out of the home with support or do they need vaccination in the home?**

- Can leave the home, but needs transportation
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- Unable to leave the home for other reasons  
(Please explain)



# Current WA Homebound Eligibility

Is there anything else you would like us to know?

**Comments**



# Role Play!

- An older woman calls looking to receive the COVID-19 vaccine but doesn't think she is eligible.
- A caller with a chronic illness calls worried that they can't receive the vaccine because they can't stand in line.
- A Deaf person needs more information about how to receive the vaccine. They are using a relay-service.



# Role Play!

- A person calls because they want a vaccine but are afraid to leave their home.
- A caller with a mental health disability is convinced that if they go to the vaccination site they will end up being committed to an institution because they have been committed in the past and crowds are overwhelming for them.





**Questions?**



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# Thank you!

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