

# Inclusivity Equity Checklist



Ensuring  
Vaccine Sites  
are Accessible  
to People with  
Disabilities

Project ALI  E



Accessible Life-saving Integrated Vaccine Equity



Project ALIVE (Accessible Life-saving Integrated Vaccine Equity) is a focused effort to remove barriers to vaccinations for people with disabilities living in the rural areas of Arkansas, Montana, and Missouri. The goal is to help those wanting a vaccine and needing support to access one.

Rooted in the values of self-determination and self-direction, the project does not seek to persuade or convince, but will serve as a resource to provide equitable vaccination planning, programs, services, and procedures.

This document is intended to help maintain a welcoming and affirming inclusive environment for people with disabilities of diverse communities while they obtain COVID-19 vaccinations. An inclusive environment is one that is physically accessible, as well as a psychologically safe place to which a person may look forward to returning for services. In addition to using this checklist for vaccine sites, you may find this document helpful in providing other health care services to people with disabilities.

Some of these items may be required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Rehab Act”) such as modifications to policies or practices. Consult a qualified attorney if you would like more information.

For vaccine site requirements and recommendations, refer to the [Vaccine Site Checklist](#).

*Project ALIVE is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,900,000 with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.*

## Some Recommended Practices Around COVID-19

Below are some recommendations to create a safe and inclusive vaccine site.

Follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local public health guidelines. When possible, organizations should provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as masks, and hand sanitizer.

**Not all masks are created equal. For people that are able, follow the following recommendations:**

- Good: Fitted cloth masks
- Better: Surgical masks
- Best: N-95 or KN-95

When staff are wearing masks, it is a good inclusivity practice to take a photo of the provider without a mask and adhere it to a badge that they wear.



**If a person cannot wear a mask due to their disability, develop alternatives.**

- An alternative to masking includes face shield
- Social distancing, isolating/quarantining are also recommended

**It may be appropriate to meet with people with disabilities at home when they can't be vaccinated for COVID-19 or when they have been vaccinated but are immunocompromised.**

## Guidelines for Inclusivity

Conduct the meeting at a venue that is structurally accessible, including parking, restrooms, entrances/exits, path to meeting areas, and meeting areas.

Use respectful language in all communications. Consult with local disability-led organizations on preferred language in your area.

Ask yourself and adjust accordingly:

- Are there any communities for which outreach is still needed?
- Have I made a list of diverse communities in my area, including the diversity within the disability community?
- Have I built relationships with members of diverse communities?
- Have I reached out to people from diverse communities, including people who are members of more than one diverse community, to look at my agency's vaccine site policies and practices?
- Have I asked the person what they need to make the vaccine process accessible to them?
- Am I aware of and do I demonstrate respect for cultural differences?
- If a person with a disability gives a response that is unclear, try to restate it and ask if you are correct.

Periodically ask if there are questions.

## **Outreach**

Did you email, call, or otherwise reach out to:

Immigrant organizations

Refugee organizations

Disability organizations

Ethnic and racially identified organizations

LGBTQ+ organizations

Women's organizations

Veterans' organizations

Organizations and agencies that serve low income people

Are you keeping a document that tracks organizations' responses and involvement?

Yes

No

## **Policy and Organizational Structure**

Do your registration and other relevant forms ask people about their primary language used at home?

Yes

No

Do your registration and other relevant forms ask people their pronouns?

Yes

No

Do your registration and other relevant forms include options for gender identity, such as including options like non-binary or transgender?

Yes      No

Do demographic collection forms allow for people to identify with:

Multiple races

Both race and ethnicity separately

One or more disability diagnoses or identities

Options beyond binary Gender and Sex identity (such as non-binary, transgender)

Country of origin

Do patient/consumer data collection forms document homelessness or unstable housing (in order to make flu communications re: second shot, boosters, side effects, etc.)

Are staff trained on relevant sections of your Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) policies and procedures, as it relates to their job functions?

Yes      No

Is there a policy or procedure to refer to people by the names and pronouns the person uses included in the DEI policies, procedures, or plans?

Yes      No

Are staff instructed on this policy or procedure?

Yes      No

Do you incorporate the following in your policies and practices?

Allowing an individual with a disability, such as an autistic person, a person with ADHD, mental health conditions or other disabilities, to walk or move around the vaccine site

Not expecting eye contact

Allowing additional time for people with intellectual, speech and other disabilities to respond

Allowing longer time for people with disabilities to undergo the vaccination process

Asking people if they prefer to have documents read and completed with the help of a staff member or to read and complete forms by themselves

Is there a policy or procedure to de-escalate situations?

Yes      No

Are staff instructed on the de-escalation policy or procedure?

Yes      No

Are there instructions on when it is and when it is not appropriate to call the police?

Yes      No

Are there instructions on when it is not appropriate to call the police?

Yes      No

Is there a Crisis Intervention/Stabilization Unit available in your area to contact as an alternative to the police?

Yes      No

## **Electronic or Print Materials**

Are all electronic registration or other forms screen reader accessible?

Yes      No

Are all electronic registration or other forms compliant with WCAG 2.0 guidelines?

Yes      No

Are all materials compliant with WCAG 2.0 guidelines?

Yes      No

Are materials provided in multiple languages?

Yes      No

Are materials available in the following alternative format?

Braille

Easy read

Large print

Plain language

Sign language

Text-Only



Do you have images in your literature, on your website, in videos, on TV, or in social media?

Yes      No

Did you include images of:

People with apparent disabilities

People of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds?

People of different ages?

People from more than one diverse community?



## **Language Translation or Interpretation**

Do you provide language translation on-site or virtually?

Yes      No

If yes, which languages do you provide?

Is this information easily available on the registration site and/or website?

Yes      No

Do you have a plan to secure translation for languages that are not common in your area?

Yes      No

Do you provide sign language interpretation on-site or virtually for people who are Deaf, Deafblind, or otherwise need interpretation?

Yes      No

If yes, what sign languages do you provide?

Is this information easily available on the registration site and/or website?

Yes      No

Do you have a plan to secure sign language interpretation for languages that are not common in your area?

Yes      No

# Environment

Do you provide the following as needed?

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

A quiet space separate from registration, vaccination, and waiting areas

A space on the vaccine site that does not have fluorescent and other harsh lighting

Accessible gender-neutral bathrooms that are available to the public

Do you provide items that can help some people relax and focus, such as:

White noise machine

Fidget devices

Stress balls

Ear protection or noise-canceling headphones

Weighted blankets

Snacks and beverages, as CDC Guidelines permit

Do you have peer support specialists on-site?

Yes      No

Do you encourage people to bring a support person if they choose?

Yes      No

## Transportation

Do you provide free conventional transportation options (i.e. Uber/Lyft rides)?

Yes      No

Can people reach your vaccine site via multiple public transportation routes, such as multiple bus routes?

Yes      No

If yes, do you have a fare assistance policy?

Yes      No

If your vaccine site is not accessible by public transportation, do you provide free accessible transportation options?

Yes      No

## In-Home Vaccines

In-home vaccinations can be a good option for some people with disabilities. Please consult the [CDC's "Vaccinating Homebound Persons With COVID-19 Vaccine" website](#) which provides guidance on management of vaccines and vaccination for persons vaccinated at home or in small group settings (e.g., residential facilities, group homes).

Obligations to provide equally effective communication apply in an in-home vaccination setting.

Do you provide in-home vaccines for people that are unable to go to a vaccine site due to their disability or medical condition?

Yes      No

If yes, is this information easily available on the registration site and/or website?

Yes      No

Are sign language interpreters available for in-home vaccinations?

Yes      No

Is Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) available for in-home vaccinations if in-person sign language interpreters are not available?

Yes      No

Are any materials distributed available in alternate formats, such as braille, or large print?

Yes      No

Is the person receiving the vaccine informed they can have a support person or peer advocate with them during the vaccination?

Yes      No

Are vaccinators instructed to ask people to come out of the house to receive the vaccine if the person does not want the vaccinator to come into the house or if the vaccinator feels uncomfortable going into the house?

Yes      No

# Glossary

**Apparent Disability:** Any physical, mental, or emotional impairment that has a visible indicator. That indicator might be an assistive device, a particular set of actions, a communication method, a physical feature or something else.

**Braille:** Braille is a code that enables blind people to read with their fingertips using a system of six raised dots. It was created in 1821 by a French boy named Louis Braille when he was just eleven years old. Today, Braille is used all over the world in many languages. ([National Federation of the Blind](#))

**Diverse Communities:** Groups of people identified by varied social categorizations or identities, such as disability, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, political and/or ideological beliefs, professional affiliation, etc. There are often distinct groups within broadly defined communities.

Examples of distinct groups within diverse communities include the Deaf community as one of many groups within the larger disability community, Baptists within the larger community of Christians people, and women within the larger category of humanity. Distinct groups can also be called intersectional identities. (as defined by Regina S. Dyton, MSW)

**Easy Read:** Presentation of text in an accessible, easy to understand format. It is often useful for people with learning disabilities, and may also be beneficial for people with other conditions affecting how they process information. ([Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities](#))

**Fidget Devices or Fidget Toys:** Devices including fidget spinners, cubes, and other objects which research shows that, when used by adults and children with autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety and other disabilities can help them relax and focus. ("[Popping toys, the latest fidget craze, might reduce stress for adults and children alike](#)")

**Hearing protection:** Hearing protection is used to reduce noise reaching the wearer's ear. Ear protection or noise-canceling headphones can help autistic people, as well as people with other sensory disabilities, focus and relax.

**Intersectionality:** The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as disability, race, class, sexual orientation, gender, etc., as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. The term, intersectionality, was coined by professor Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe where and how various forms of oppression intersect and affect people. Multiple identities such as woman, Asian, disabled and Muslim may be referred to as intersectional identities.



**Large-print** (also large-type or large-font): Refers to the formatting of a text document in which the typeface (or font) is considerably larger than usual to accommodate people who have low vision.

**Noise-canceling headphones:** Reduce unwanted ambient sounds using active noise control. This is distinct from passive headphones which, if they reduce ambient sounds at all, use techniques such as soundproofing.

**Non-Apparent Disability:** Any physical, mental, or emotional impairment that has no visible indicator.

**Plain Language:** [Communication with] wording, structure, and design [that is] so clear that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information. ([Plain Language Association International](#))

**Screen Reader Accessible:** Screen readers are software programs that allow blind or visually impaired users to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display. ([American Foundation for the Blind](#))

**Text-Only:** A document that contains no images or graphics; formatting, such as bold or italic text; colors; or other types of markup. It also includes single line breaks and spacing. Text-only documents can help someone who is blind and only needs the text read to them, or someone who has an intellectual disability and has difficulty processing complex documents. (The Partnership)

**WCAG Guidelines:** Web Content Accessibility Guidelines is a technical standard that provides information about how to make information accessible on electronic devices. It is currently in its second version. ([World Wide Web Consortium \(W3C\)](#))

**Weighted blanket:** "A weighted blanket is a heavy blanket that is used to aid sleep and reduce anxiety. Initially, weighted blankets were most commonly used as therapeutic tools to assist individuals with autism spectrum disorders, dementia, and mental health conditions." ([Wikipedia](#))

**White Noise Machine:** A white noise machine is a device that produces a noise that calms the listener. Many devices include sounds like a rushing waterfall, wind blowing through trees, and other nature-like sounds. ([Wikipedia](#))