

COVID-19 Testing & Accessibility

As the State works to control the spread of COVID-19, and as testing capability increases in Idaho, it is important to ensure that testing facilities and services are accessible to people with disabilities.

Testing in Idaho should be accessible to people with disabilities through the following:

- Provide the option of a walk-up site that is accessible for wheelchairs, vans, and other mobility equipment;
- Post messaging in languages that are appropriate to the community where sites are located, including symbol or picture-based explanations of the testing process;
- Have an American Sign Language Interpreter either on-site, or provide video remote interpreting or real time captioning using a smart device;
- Use audio amplification where barriers may exist between staff and patients;
- Provide information to the public about how to request an accommodation or file a complaint;
- Provide testing accommodations for people who cannot travel to a testing site;
- Allow service animals;
- Engage with disability subject matter experts to ensure testing sites and services are accessible.

Testing Requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) and the Rehabilitation Act (1973)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that health care providers provide individuals with disabilities full and equal access to their health care services and facilities. Title II of the ADA applies to public hospitals, clinics and health care services operated by state and local governments and Title III of the ADA applies to privately-owned and operated hospitals, clinics and health care providers. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act applies to recipients of federal financial assistance such as Medicaid, Medicare and other federally funded programs, including federal funds distributed related to a declared emergency. People with disabilities have a fundamental right to access medical care, including testing. This requirement extends not only to physical access at private and public facilities, programs, and events – it also includes policy changes that private and governmental entities must make to ensure that all people with disabilities can take part in, and benefit from, the programs and services of State and local governments.

Why Testing is Important

People with disabilities are often among those most at-risk for COVID-19. Many rely on in-home care providers for help with activities of daily living (ADLs). Others, including the elderly

and people with intellectual disabilities, have limited options for quarantine or self-isolation because they live in variety of congregate settings, including nursing and group homes. Robust and continued testing of people with disabilities, facility staff and in-home care providers will help stop the introduction and spread of COVID-19 to people living in their homes and in environments where transmission can occur more easily and where the medical consequences from the virus can be severe.

Drive-Thru Testing

Drive-thru medical sites are one way that hospitals, clinics and health departments are providing intermittent medical services with greater ease and safety for their patients. These sites are especially useful for medical testing during times of outbreak since keeping patients in vehicles can help to minimize exposure to a contagious disease. In these cases, the patient's vehicle may be approached by a medical provider who is wearing personal protective equipment (e.g. face mask, gloves, and a smock); the patient may be instructed to lower their window to allow a 4-inch gap, through which the provider communicates with, performs the test on, and exchanges written information with the patient, or the patient's family member, friend, or helper. Testing sites must be accessible to people in wheelchairs, including people who do not drive and who may walk-up to the site. Reasonable accommodations or modifications should be considered based on individual assessment, need and request.

Mobile Testing

Many people with disabilities do not own or drive a vehicle. They may not have access to reliable and accessible public transportation, especially in rural areas. If a person who is transportation-limited is believed to be COVID-19 positive and is directed to be tested, it is unclear if public transportation would even allow this person to use transit services. For people who cannot drive themselves and who do not have social supports to provide transportation, mobile and in-home testing is a reasonable accommodation.

Subject Matter Experts (SME) & Technical Advisors

Disability subject matter experts with state agencies and nonprofit organizations are available to provide technical assistance in the application of federal disability civil rights laws. If you need technical assistance on topics like ensuring a facility (i.e. drive-thru testing site) is accessible for people who use wheelchairs, providing information to people who are deaf or hard of hearing, or blind or low vision, and putting information in plain language, you should contact the appropriate member of the Idaho Disability Technical Assistance Team listed on the following pages.

Regional Centers for Independent Living (directly serve people with disabilities/SME):

Disability Action Center Northwest (DAC-NW)	Mark Leeper Executive Director (208) 883-0523 mark@dacnw.org http://www.dacnw.org	Northern Idaho (Boundary, Bonner, Benewah, Clearwater, Idaho, Kootenai, Latah, Lewis, Nez Perce, Shoshone Counties)
Living Independence Network Corporation (LINC)	LeAnn Naillon Executive Director (208) 336-3335 lnaillon@lincid.org	Southcentral - Southwestern Idaho (Ada, Adams, Blaine, Boise, Camas, Canyon, Elmore, Gem, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Owyhee, Payette, Twin Falls, Washington, Valley Counties)
Living Independently for Everyone (LIFE)	Mandy Greaser Executive Director (208) 232-2747 mandy@idlife.org http://www.idlife.org	Eastern Idaho (Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Bonneville, Butte, Caribou, Cassia, Clark, Custer, Franklin, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, Minidoka, Oneida, Power, Teton Counties)

Statewide Resources:

Northwest ADA Center-Idaho

Dana Gover, Project Coordinator
(208) 841-9422
dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com
<http://nwadacenter.org>
(General ADA-related questions)

Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Steve Achabal, Independent Living Program Coordinator
(208) 334-3220 ext. 113
steve.achabal@icbvi.idaho.gov
<http://www.icbvi.state.id.us/>

Idaho Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Steven Snow, Executive Director
(208) 334-0879
steven.snow@vr.idaho.gov
<https://cdhh.idaho.gov>

Idaho Council on Development Disabilities

Christine Pisani, Executive Director

(208) 334-2178

christine.pisani@icdd.idaho.gov

<https://icdd.idaho.gov>

Idaho Assistive Technology Program

Krista Kramer, Alternate Finance Program Coordinator

(208) 885-6097

kkramer@uidaho.edu

<http://www.idahoat.org>

(Questions related to accessible communication technology)

Technical Resources:

- Northwest ADA Center Accessibility at Drive -Thru Medical Sites

If you have problems making contact with any resources listed above, or are having difficulty resolving a questions or issue, please contact Jeremy Maxand at (208) 781-8611 or jeremy.maxand@silc.idaho.gov or Mel Leviton at (208) 781-8610 or mel.leviton@silc.idaho.gov at the Idaho State Independent Living Council.