



Safeguard Against Disability Discrimination During COVID-19

Including individuals with disabilities in the COVID-19 response to ensure equitable care



THINK EQUITABLE CARE - TAKE ACTION!

- **Inform key medical personnel** immediately that individuals with disabilities have equal rights to COVID-19 testing and treatment.
- **Make equitable decisions** to ensure that allocation of COVID-19 resources, supplies, and care are not based on inaccurate assumptions about life with a disability.
- **Provide accommodations** to make sure all individuals can access COVID-19 testing and treatment. This requirement includes accommodations for behavioral, intellectual, or physical disabilities that may impact someone's ability to comply during testing and treatment.



KNOW THE BEST PRACTICES - TAKE ACTION!

- **When communicating with individuals with disabilities:**
 - Talk directly to them.
 - Ask permission before speaking with their caregivers, if possible.
 - Ask the caregiver for assistance if you need help communicating with a patient.
 - Use plain language to tell individuals and caregivers about COVID-19 test results and anticipated procedures.
 - Keep in mind that you may have difficulty understanding the patient, however, in most cases they understand you.
- **Make these accommodations:**
 - Allow a caregiver to go with a patient to ensure adequate support for decision-making and treatment.
 - Provide ramps and rooms with enough access for a wheelchair.
 - Provide qualified interpreter services for the deaf or hard of hearing.
 - Use prompts, such as picture cues, for those with limited use of verbal communication.
 - Provide the time needed for individuals to speak, respond, and understand.

THINK EQUITABLE!

This information is based on guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights.
For more information, visit [HHS.gov/ocr](https://www.hhs.gov/ocr) and bit.ly/2WXEscv