



August 14, 2020

## Tips for Providers

# COVID-19 Testing for People with Disabilities

People with disabilities belong to a diverse community, with many different priorities and concerns when it comes to COVID-19. People with disabilities experienced inequities in health care prior to the pandemic, and the current situation has exacerbated these inequities. With this in mind, if someone with a disability needs to be tested for COVID-19, health care providers can take steps to make the experience more accessible for these individuals.

### Make sure there are accessible options at testing locations.

- It is difficult for some people with disabilities to access safe, reliable transportation. Offer in-home specimen collection for those who need it.
- Some sites that have been set up for COVID-19 testing are not physically accessible to people with disabilities. Of particular concern are drive-up testing sites.
  - The Northwest ADA Center has provided [guidance](#) on making drive-up specimen collection accessible to people with disabilities Review and adopt this guidance for drive-up sites.

### Work with individuals to learn what they need to get tested.

Solutions that aim to be universal will likely leave people behind and exacerbate inequities. People with disabilities are the experts on their conditions and can provide insight into which accommodations they need.

- Ask people with disabilities what testing options work best for them and be prepared to deliver those services. Options may include:
  - In-home testing
  - Testing in another familiar location
  - Testing in a health care provider's office outside of normal business hours
  - Presence of support person(s) during testing
  - Alternate methods of specimen collection for people unable to tolerate nasopharyngeal swabs

## Make sure people receive – and can understand – important information about testing.

- Explain what to expect during specimen collection in plain language or using pictures or videos.
  - Describe the testing process in plain language. Be sure to cover:
    - How long will they wait for their results?
    - How will you let them know what their results are?
    - Let them know in advance that if their result is positive a case investigator from their local county health department will contact them
  - Provide accessible communication, including ASL and languages other than English, at the specimen collection site.
    - Have tools available to help staff identify patients who may need ASL and interpretive services:
      - ♦ [Communication Accommodation Card \(Deaf, Deaf-Blind or Hard of Hearing\)](#)
      - ♦ [Preferred language cards](#)
- ✓ How can someone request ASL or other language interpreters?

**Document Accessibility:** For individuals with disabilities or individuals who speak a language other than English, OHA can provide information in alternate formats such as translations, large print, or braille. Contact Mavel Morales at 1-844-882-7889, 711 TTY or [OHA.ADAModifications@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:OHA.ADAModifications@dhsosha.state.or.us).