

Spring 2020



CIEP ALERT

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COALITION ON INCLUSIVE EMERGENCY PLANNING
a program of the Washington State Independent Living Council



A SILVER LINING AMID THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

According to Wikipedia, the idiom, a *silver lining* is a metaphor for optimism in the common English-language which means a negative occurrence may have a positive aspect to it. Since before mid-March of this year, we have been bombarded by news about the novel coronavirus or the COVID-19 pandemic. This global health emergency has already turned the world upside down for many of us. As most of us endure stay-at-home orders imposed by elected officials, circumstances forced us to adapt and be innovative so that WASILC can continue to operate virtually, and that CIEP can share critical lifesaving information with our stakeholders and other supporters.



A close-up of the novel coronavirus

As news about COVID-19 fill our email and social media inboxes, among dire predictions and misinformation, we spot occasional glimmers of hope. It has been said that disasters bring out the best in people who do things that make this world a better place. These glimmers of hope can be categorized as C. for compassion, I. for innovation, E. for equity, and P. for policy as follows:

Compassion: We are becoming more aware of new ways to engage with our neighbors and friends of all ages, especially with people who are elderly and those with disabilities and other access and functional needs. With the internet and other technologies, we are able to connect and fill some unmet human needs despite social distancing mandates that minimize our exposure to the virus. Essential workers and volunteers risk their lives to ensure that our health and safety remains a priority.

Innovation: Individuals, small businesses, nonprofits, and corporations are becoming more creative. By thinking outside the box to solve common barriers to daily life, many of our efforts will end up benefitting more people than we anticipated long after the pandemic subsides. Ventilators, face masks, and other personal protective equipment that became scarce, are now manufactured by companies that repurposed their assembly lines so heroes on the front lines have what they need to protect the rest of us. Distilleries make more hand sanitizer by mixing waste alcohol byproducts with aloe vera, and giving them

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away for free. Volunteers everywhere are sewing washable homemade face masks out of cloth, some with clear windows for communication. What if this pandemic happened 20 years ago? It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to have social distancing without the technology like we have today.

Equity: The COVID-19 crisis has brought a renewed focus on our access and functional needs. Our governor has an ASL interpreter standing six feet away from him translating his remarks for deaf people who rely on sign language as their primary source of information. To meet the needs of those with Limited English Proficiency, Washington state and several counties are producing ASL and foreign language educational videos. DOH and the NW ADA Center are providing best practices to ensure that quarantine and testing sites are fully accessible.



WA State Governor Jay Inslee does an elbow bump with ASL interpreter, Terry Dockter before a live news conference in King County. CREDIT-Elaine-Thompson-AP

Policy: The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has clarified that our civil rights laws are not waived during this state of emergency. Even after 30 years, the Americans with Disabilities Act remains in effect, giving us full protection of the law especially during this coronavirus crisis. We are relieved that just the mere presence of a disability will not be a legal factor in adverse medical decisions under some misguided presumption that our lives have less value than others.

Conclusion: While our Centers for Independent Living around the country are grateful for the support from their state and local counties, we are still stretched thin in spite of the CARES Act emergency funding from Congress. One good outcome is the huge amount of media reports spotlighting the different barriers from poor planning in the past. Individuals and organizations have come up on their own to offer possible solutions and given us opportunities to provide feedback on improving those solutions such as food delivery and clear facemasks. Even though some temporary emergency proclamations may impose some hardships on individuals with disabilities, we recognize that certain changes to local, state and federal policy during this state of emergency may have a tendency to be permanent. For example, allowing people to telework from home at least a few times per week could become a reasonable accommodation for more employees, even after the crisis has passed because we find that allows more people to be more productive in their jobs.

CIEP appreciates this unprecedented level of collaboration with the Department of Health, Emergency Management Division, and our many partners during this time of emergency. With their support, CIEP has conducted weekly online teleconferences with other state agencies, FEMA, American Red Cross, local emergency management, centers for independent living and other community based disability organizations, as well as individual advocates. To participate in this ongoing planning for the Whole Community in Washington State, please contact Jim House at CIEP.

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Did you know that 1 in every 5 individuals will experience a mental health crisis in their lifetime?

- Mental Health America Tools to Thrive <https://www.mhanational.org/mental-health-month>
- Pledge To Be Stigma Free <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Pledge-to-Be-StigmaFree>
- Managing Stress & Anxiety During Covid-19 and Workplace Mental Health <https://www.bizlibrary.com/products/content-libraries/mental-health-playlist/thank-you/>
- Myths and Facts about Mental Health https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/sites/default/files/TtC%20quiz%20cards_0.pdf
- Maintaining Healthy Boundaries as an Employee Champion https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/sites/default/files/2.%20Maintaining%20healthy%20boundaries%20as%20an%20Employee%20Champion_0.pdf
- Famous People with Mental Health Diagnoses <https://medium.com/invisible-illness/fifteen-famous-people-who-were-successful-in-spite-of-their-anxiety-issues-90ea48c94e29>
- Sound Health (Services in ASL for Deaf and Hard of Hearing) <https://www.sound.health/deaf-hard-of-hearing/>
- Insight Timer <https://insighttimer.com/>
- Smiling Mind <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/>
- Head Space <https://www.headspace.com/headspace-meditation-app>
- UCLA Mindful <https://www.uclahealth.org/ucla-mindful>
- Stop, Breathe, Think <https://www.stopbreathethink.com/>
- If you are in a crisis, feeling suicidal or know someone who is, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. You can also use the Crisis Text Line at <https://www.crisistextline.org/>

CIEP is a statewide advisory group that brings expertise into disaster planning based on access and functional needs (AFN) faced by people with disabilities in these areas: 1) Effective communications, 2) Programmatic Access, and 3) Physical Access. We welcome any suggestions for future issues of the CIEP ALERT quarterly newsletter. Past issues since 2018 are available at <https://www.wasilc.org/newsletter>.

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ACCESS & FUNCTIONAL NEEDS RESOURCES

WA Emergency Management Division—Disaster Ready Washington

<https://mil.wa.gov/preparedness?fbclid=IwAR28YOxqRCOh4YmIvjJ3EAmr7ufac1ZW06Og4Xtftpqh4Uc0nfvnRS80GU8>

WA Emergency Management Division—Alert & Notification Warnings by County

<https://mil.wa.gov/alerts?fbclid=IwAR0d22Yjf-NmWsYbUTd-YMREr399BWzpozDYcSlup7QWV-86BQJkuHUUsjo>

WA State Local Emergency Management Agencies by county

<https://www.ready.gov/washington>

WA State Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJ) by city/county

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/AboutUs/PublicHealthSystem/LocalHealthJurisdictions>

WA State Department of Health Novel Coronavirus Outbreak 2020

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus?>

WASILC now has a web page full of useful information about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and its impact on people with disabilities and other access and functional needs. On this page, we post links to COVID-19 information on the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) websites, and other links to news, tools, and other resources of interest. Stay well!

<https://www.wasilc.org/post/novel-coronavirus-covid-19>

Coming Events:

CIEP Networking Meetings Note: All Networking Meetings have been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic response. Instead we are meeting online using Zoom every Wednesday beginning at 10:00am and ending at 11:00am.

WHEN: Every Wednesday at 10:00 am until further notice.

WHERE: Zoom: Email Jim.House@dshs.wa.gov for an invitation to next meeting.

Washington State Independent Living Council Quarterly Meetings

WHEN: Thurs. 7/9/2020: 9:00am - 4:00pm & Fri. 7/10/2020: 9:00am - 2:00pm

WHERE: Central WA Disability Resources, TBD, Ellensburg



Note: Due to the status of WASILC's COVID-19 response, a decision has not yet been made to hold our meeting in Ellensburg as scheduled or if we will meet virtually. The finalized meeting agenda will be announced near the end of May. Contact Jolie at Jolie.Ramsey@dshs.wa.gov or 360.725.3693 for more info.

All CIEP Networking Meetings and WASILC Quarterly Meetings are open to everyone and fragrance-free. ASL interpreters and CART are provided. For other reasonable accommodation requests, please contact either email above at least two weeks or as early as possible prior to the meeting to ensure availability.