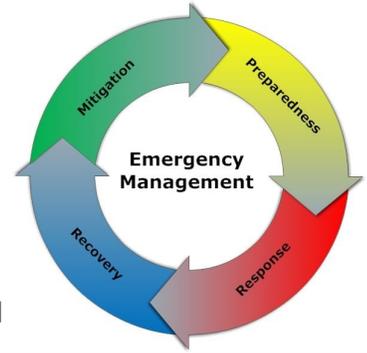




CIEP ALERT



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

“A SHOT OF HOPE AND EQUITY”

On March 17, 2021, the dynamics surrounding the COVID vaccination program in Washington State changed. One week earlier on March 10, Washington Governor Jay Inslee announced some important updates from the Department of Health (DOH) that expanded the criteria for people eligible for vaccines. DOH has prioritized people with certain disabilities 16 and older and their caregivers can qualify to get a coronavirus vaccine.



Young Black woman in a wheelchair after receiving a vaccine.

People with disabilities that qualify include individuals with Down Syndrome, a developmental or intellectual disability, those who are deaf/hard of hearing, blind/low vision, or deafblind AND that disability or underlying medical condition that increases their risk for severe outcomes according to guidance from the Center on Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [Certain Medical Conditions and Risk for Severe COVID-19 Illness | CDC](#)

According to DOH, caregivers are also eligible to receive vaccines now in 1a. DOH has clarified the definition for caregivers eligible for vaccine to ensure more consistent and equitable access. Caregivers who meet this definition are eligible for vaccine in 1a as workers in health care settings. Specifically, eligible caregivers (licensed, unlicensed, paid, unpaid, formal, or informal) who support the daily, functional and health needs of another individual who is at high risk for COVID-19 illness due to advanced age, long-term physical condition, co-morbidities, or developmental or intellectual disability. For the caregiver to be eligible, the care recipient must be someone who needs caregiving support for their daily, functioning, and health needs. The recipient can be an adult or minor child. For dependent minor children, the caregiver is eligible if that child has an underlying health condition or disability that puts them at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness such as a caregiver of a minor child with Down syndrome.

There are currently three COVID-19 vaccines that have been approved by the Food and

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Drug Administration (FDA) for emergency use.. Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines require two doses while the third vaccine from Janssen Biotech of Johnson & Johnson requires only one dose. Other vaccines including AstraZeneca/University of Oxford are still undergoing clinical trials, and pending FDA Emergency Use Authorization at this time.

As soon as we became eligible in Washington State, my wife and I went to the [Phase Finder](#) website and answered a few questions that cleared us to receive any one of the COVID vaccines that was offered by a vaccination site. Next, we went to the [Vaccine Locator](#) website and found a two-dose Moderna vaccine available the following week at a medical center near our home. We called them through the video relay service, and was told that a sign language interpreter could not be guaranteed for our appointment. We went ahead and booked our appointments anyway as we had an upcoming trip and wanted to be fully vaccinated by the time



A syringe needle drawing liquid from a vial.

we left. An hour later my wife received a call from our insurance provider offering a one-dose Janssen vaccine within a few days accompanied by an ASL interpreter. We quickly took that time slot and cancelled our first appointment. When we got there, not one but four ASL interpreters came to greet us! Our insurance provider had contacted many deaf patients to schedule their injections during the same time slot. The whole procedure took less than an hour, and we were able to ask questions about possible side-effects. Kudos to this provider and the interpreters for providing effective communications.

How did we get here? On the one-year anniversary of the pandemic declaration by the World Health Organization (WHO), three vaccines have undergone clinical trials with overwhelmingly positive results. In the past, it had taken several years to do testing and clinical trials, and not all providers will generate results necessary to receive the FDA's blessings. The first two vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna were made using new technology using "Messenger RNA" which instructs your body immune system to recognize a coronavirus in your body and attacks the virus. Both require two doses several weeks apart. The third vaccine from Johnson & Johnson (and a fourth from AstraZeneca if authorized by the FDA) uses a different approach with an adenovirus to instruct the body to create the SARS-2 spike protein. This approach has been used in the past with their Ebola vaccines. It requires one dose and does not have to be kept in a deep freeze. It is still unclear how long the protection will last from any of the vaccines.

Last but not least, we must give a big applause to the Washington State Department of Health. Over the past year, DOH has convened many virtual roundtable discussions incorporating values based on diversity, equity and inclusion into different aspects of the COVID-19 response. These aspects focuses on effective communications and equitable messaging, prioritizing people with disabilities and their caregivers, home-based vaccination campaigns for people unable to leave their homes or stand in long lines, and accessibility reviews for testing, quarantine, and mass vaccination sites.

CIEP Provides Input at FEMA Region 10 RISC Meeting

Every quarter, FEMA Region 10 convenes its Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) to discuss strategies for emergency management partners from different federal agencies in the Pacific Northwest to collaborate. Region 10 includes the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington and the tribal nations. At each three-day RISC meeting, a day is devoted to a specific topic, and during the March 2021 gathering, Danielle Bailey, the Regional Disability Integration Specialist for the agency moderated an all-day agenda on Access and Functional Needs.



Several Washingtonians and CIEP Stakeholders were presented on different panels during the second day to discuss the importance of having Disability Coordinator positions with Access and Functional Needs (AFN) expertise in emergency management and the value of cross-disability advisory groups along with best practices and lessons learned. Other panels covered best practices on accessibility for food, water, sheltering, health, medical, and transportation. The local presenters were: Sheri Badger (King County EM), Jim House (WASILC/CIEP), Louise Ryan (ACL), Ivan Tudela (Pierce County EM), Mahi Zeru (DOH), Deborah Witmer (City of Seattle), Scott Bates (USCG), Bree Boyce and Dean Sydnor (RARET). Other presenters include Sadie Martinez (CO), Katey Redmond, MPH (AK), Jami Davis (ID), Lanny Mommsen (AK), and Tracey Singh (CA).

The RISC meeting concluded with a discussion on initial planning for Cascadia Rising 22, a full scale exercise simulating federal and state response to a massive 9.2M earthquake off the Pacific Coast in the Cascadia Subduction Zone in June 2022. CIEP looks forward to be among others overseeing the AFN components in this exercise.

ACCESS & FUNCTIONAL NEEDS RESOURCES

WA Emergency Management Division—Disaster Ready Washington

<https://mil.wa.gov/preparedness?fbclid=IwAR28YQxqRCOh4YmIvJ3EAmr7ufac1ZW6Og4Xtfpqh4Uc0nfvcnRS80GU8>

WA Emergency Management Division—Alert & Notification Warnings listed by County

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

WA State Local Emergency Management Agencies listed by County

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

WA State Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJ) listed by City/County

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

WA State Department of Ecology – Emergency Planning Committees listed by County

<https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Reporting-requirements/Emergency-Planning-Community-Right-to-Know-Act/Local-Emergency-Planning-Committees#0>

CDC Disability and Health Emergency Preparedness

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/emergencypreparedness.html>

North Carolina—AFN in Emergency Management

[NC DPS: Access and Functional Needs in Emergency Management](#)

WASILC Solidarity Statement

The Washington State Independent Living Council (WASILC) stands in solidarity with the Black Community and all Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. We fully support the Black Lives Matter movement and condemn systemic racism, oppression, and injustice. Achieving our mission requires us to educate and advocate for systemic changes for all people with disabilities, which includes the intersectionality of race and disability. We recommit to this vital work and will hold ourselves accountable to become better allies. We know we cannot elevate the disability community without elevating the BIPOC communities we serve.

About CIEP

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 three areas: 1) Effective communications, 2) Programmatic Access, and 3) Physical Access. We welcome any suggestions for future issues of the quarterly **CIEP ALERT** newsletter. Past issues since 2018 are available at <https://www.wasilc.org/newsletter>.

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email: Jim.House@dshs.wa.gov www.wasilc.org/coalition-on-inclusive-emergency-planning

COMING EVENTS

[CIEP Standup Calls \(Response to COVID-19 and other Disasters\)](#)

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

WHERE: Zoom —Email Jim.House@dshs.wa.gov for more info

Note: Until further notice, all CIEP standup calls will be biweekly every other Wednesdays beginning at 10am and ending at 11am.



[Washington State Independent Living Council \(WASILC\) Quarterly Meetings](#)

WHEN: Thursday 4/15/2021: 10:00am - 4:00pm

WHERE: Zoom —Email Jolie.Ramsey@dshs.wa.gov or call 360.725.3693 for more info.

Note: Due to the status of WASILC's COVID-19 response, the next Quarterly Meeting will be held virtually. The finalized meeting agenda will be announced soon.

All CIEP Standup Calls and WASILC Quarterly Meetings are open to everyone and fragrance-free. ASL interpreters and CART will be provided. For other reasonable accommodation requests, please contact us through either email as early as possible prior to the meeting to ensure availability.