



## Vaccine Eligibility for People with Disabilities and their Providers

February 1, 2021

This document is designed to offer COVID-19 eligibility guidance for Louisiana residents with disabilities (aged 16+) and their support providers.

### **Individuals over the age of 16 with disabilities who receive home/community based services AND providers of home-based care are currently eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine under Phase 1b, Tier 1.**

- This cohort should have equal access to COVID-19 vaccinations, and no subgroup of those in Phase 1b, Tier 1 can be prioritized over another subgroup.
- Examples of proof of eligibility (one item will suffice):
  - Patient: Summary of Plan of Care, Letter from Louisiana State Medical Officer, Proof of receipt of home/community based supports, 90-L "Request for Eligibility Medical Determination" form.
  - Home care providers: Pay stubs from the following employers: Acumen Fiscal Services, Morning Sun Financial Services (MSFS), and other home health providers.

### **Best Practices for Communicating with and Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities:**

- Talk directly to the individual. Ask permission to speak with a caregiver or assistant first.
- Do not pretend to understand someone if you cannot. Let them know you are having trouble and try again.
- Use plain language when speaking with patients and caregivers about the COVID-19 vaccine.
- If speaking to someone who uses a wheelchair, try to be at their eyelevel.
- Provide accommodations so that all people in the eligible vaccine group have equal access to COVID-19 vaccinations. This includes accommodations for behavioral, intellectual, or physical disabilities. Examples include:
  - Provide ramps and ensure wheelchair accessible rooms, doorways, and restrooms.
  - Provide qualified interpreter services for the deaf or hard of hearing.
  - Use prompts, such as pictures, for those with limited use of verbal communication.

**Be patient. Provide the time needed for individuals to speak, respond, and understand.**

### **Resources:**

- COVID-19 Vaccination Information: <https://ldh.la.gov/covidvaccine/>
- COVID-19 Information for Healthcare Providers: <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/3880>
- Health Alert Network Message: Vaccine Administration and Management, *Jan 19, 2021*: <https://ldh.la.gov/assets/oph/Center-CP/HANs/HANS21-06-COVID-19-Vaccine-Administration-Management.pdf>
- Office of Aging and Adult Services, COVID-19 Memos: <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/detail/5510>
- Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, COVID-19 Information: <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/3890>