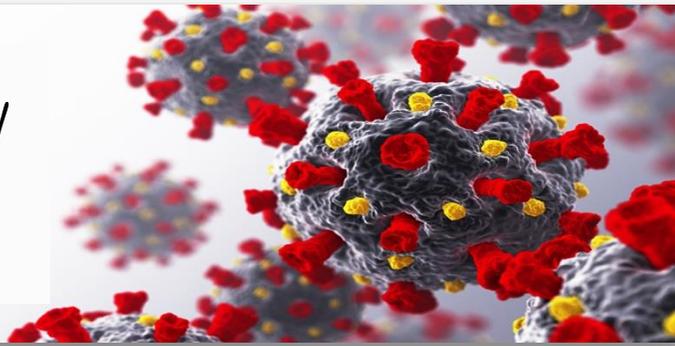


COVID-19 Testing / Vaccination Update

Westside Regional Center



Hello everyone,

Westside Regional Center would like to provide you with the most current COVID-19 updates as of 2/3/2021.

First, we would like to inform everyone that we will continue to provide our COVID-19 testing clinic at our Culver City location. The clinic will be happening every other week beginning this Friday, February 5, from 10 am to 2 pm. The clinic is open to everyone in our community, including those that we directly support, their family members, and providers. Please utilize the following link to register in advance and select "West LARC" for the site location.

- [COVID-19 Registration Form](#)

We want to note that there has been a significant decline in the number of people being tested. This is concerning since people may assume that once vaccinated, they will not contract or spread COVID-19. This is not accurate information. All we know at this point is that those individuals that are vaccinated are significantly less likely to develop moderate to severe symptoms of COVID-19. Although it does appear likely to reduce the risk of transmission, it is unknown to what extent it prevents individuals from contracting COVID-19. It is also unknown to what extent it may or may not reduce the risk of transmission [source: [LACDPH](#)].

All of that being said, and particularly since so many people remain unvaccinated, everyone must remain vigilant. This includes regular COVID-19 testing, mask-wearing, and adhering to social distancing practices.

We would encourage everyone eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine to make an appointment to get vaccinated. Los Angeles County is currently vaccinating the following groups:

- Health care workers
- Individuals in residential living situations
- Individuals over the age of 65 [source: [LACDPH](#)]

Below is a link that people can use to schedule an appointment. For individuals with disabilities or without computer access, you can call 833-540-0473 between 8:00 am and 8:30 pm, seven days a week, for assistance with scheduling an appointment.

- [Vaccinate LA County](#)

If you need assistance finding a vaccination site, the following website has been found useful: [VaccinateCA](#).

We would also like to say that we understand everyone's frustration that individuals with disabilities are not prioritized in the current vaccination plan. WRC is actively engaged with all of our statewide partners to participate in the ongoing advocacy efforts to ensure that our community voice is heard.

We would also invite everyone in the community to directly communicate their concerns with their [local assembly members and legislative representatives](#). You can also call the office of California Governor Gavin Newsom at (916) 445-2841. Make sure to:

1. Introduce yourself! Be sure to say if you have a disability, are a family member, or work in the community.
2. Explain that people with disabilities are at extra risk due to COVID-19 and need to be prioritized in Phase 1B.
3. Thank them for considering our community.

You can also send an email to www.gov.ca.gov. ARCA has created a [sample letter](#) to help you get started. Just copy and paste it into your email (personalizing your message is always better).

As the result of ongoing advocacy efforts, the state expanded its definition of health care providers. The definition now includes unpaid family caregivers of individuals with particular disabilities that provide in-home support and care to individuals identified with a developmental disability.

There has been a great deal of confusion statewide about the vaccine eligibility requirements. Following ongoing communication between the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and the Los Angeles County Public Health (LACDPH), there has been a recent agreement reached by both departments.

Parents and/or guardians of individuals with a disability identified as most at risk for severe illness should be eligible for the vaccine at this time. This includes individuals diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy, Down syndrome, Epilepsy, and other specialized health care needs that include dependence on a ventilator, oxygen, or other technology [source: [CDC](#)].

These families should contact their service coordinator for a letter to verify their child's eligible condition and the parent and/or guardian's relationship to that individual. We are aware that many parents have had difficulties demonstrating eligibility to receive the vaccine. It is advised that you provide the following [documentation](#) on the day of your appointment to show eligibility:

- [Eligibility letter from DDS](#)
- Verification letter from your WRC service coordinator
- Current IFSP or IPP document
- Medical document/records from medical provider, clinic, or doctor
- Photo ID

We also recognize that you may have concerns and questions about the vaccine. We have included the following resources to help inform you decide for yourself or your family whether or not to get vaccinated.

Fact Sheets:

- [Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions](#) (LACDPH)
- [Vaccine Misinformation](#) (LACDPH)
- [Vaccine Scams](#) (LACDPH)
- [Questions and Answers for Self-Advocates & Families About the COVID-19 Vaccine](#) (DDS)

Videos:

- [COVID-19 Facts](#) (CDPH)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Virtual Town Hall January 19, 2021](#) (LACDPH)
- [What to Expect After Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#) (CDC)

Thank you for taking the time to read this important information and continue to stay safe.