

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Recommendations for People with Disabilities using Personal Attendant Services

Used with permission from the Center for Disability Rights, Inc., a Center for Independent Living based in New York State, some parts were edited due to our space constraints and differences in attendant care programming.

1. Ensure you have sufficient back up attendants in case your regular attendants cannot work due to the illness affecting someone in their family or themselves. If you use a provider call and ask what their backup plans are in the event of a widespread outbreak. If it seems inadequate think about people you may call to help you and how you can start preparing now.
2. Ensure that you have the ability to get assistance if an attendant does not show up for work. They may not be able to get to you and you may need to make sure your needs are met. Start a checklist of possible resources from other providers which may be able to serve you, as well as family and friends who may be able to help for free in an emergency. Brainstorm with your provider to see if emergency fill in staff you identify could be paid by your provider.
3. Have at least a week of non-perishable food in your home at any given time. If you need help, check with local grocers to see if you can

order by phone or online and have it delivered to your home or have picked up. If financially unable seek out assistance from local organizations or food banks to build up stock.

4. Stock up on other important supplies. Bowel and bladder care items in addition to cleaning, toiletries, and other supplies. These are similar supplies which are recommended to possess in a natural disaster scenario.
5. Identify a way to make sure you can get your medications in a timely manner. This may mean having friends or family assist you or using a pharmacy delivery service.
6. Plan for your pets. There may be difficulties in getting pet food or your pets may need someone to take care of them if you are hospitalized.
7. Have your attendants wash their hands and use hand sanitizer when they arrive at your home and each time prior to touching or feeding you.
8. Regularly clean, sanitize and disinfect surfaces that are touched in your home to prevent the spread of infection. Have your attendant do this each time they arrive.
9. Use disinfecting wipes on items that are frequently touched. These include your telephone, doorknobs, your refrigerator handle, your wheelchair controls, lifting device controls and remote controls. Place wipes near the items that should be regularly cleaned as a cue for you and your attendants.
10. Have your attendant take extra steps to avoid possibly infecting you by wearing a surgical mask if someone close to your attendant like

a member of their household becomes sick. You both should be extra vigilant about cleanliness.

11. If your attendant becomes sick, urge them to seek medical care and utilize your backup attendants.
12. Take immediate steps to avoid infecting your attendants if you, one of your attendants, or a member of your household begins to feel sick. Protecting their health supports your own independence. Ensure everyone washes their hands and uses hand sanitizer regularly. As a person with a disability, it may be difficult for you to cover a cough or sneeze, so we encourage you to wear a surgical mask if you are sneezing or coughing. It is important to use a surgical mask correctly. The following link explains how to properly use one. <https://www.sfcidcp.org/communicable-disease/healthy-habits/how-to-put-on-and-remove-a-face-mask/>
13. If someone in your household becomes sick, take steps to avoid infecting other people. If possible, have them stay in a separate room of your home to get well. Regularly clean, sanitize and disinfect shared spaces, particularly the bathroom to avoid spreading the infection.
14. If you become sick, seek medical care immediately. As people with disabilities we are at greater risk from illnesses like these.
15. If you cannot be supported at home, contact your doctor and notify Options so we can make sure you are able to get back home when your situation is resolved. Many of us know people with disabilities who have been institutionalized when they sought medical care, so some people are reluctant to seek medical support.

Vaccine Roll-Out

As the vaccinations roll-out is currently under way in North Dakota, it is important for you to pay attention on where you fit in based on your disability or underlying condition. If you do fit into a vaccination group or question whether you do, follow the procedures outlined. Your county public health agency is your best resource so please call them, call your medical provider to insure they are aware of your need especially if you believe they may forget about you.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, some vaccines which were subsidized during their development may be given without a charge. You should always be an informed user of your medical services so ask the provider if you will be charged for the vaccine or any related costs while getting the vaccine. If you will receive a charge see if your provider will reimburse. If you have question or need help call us.



Mission Statement

Options is a non-profit organization committed to assisting individuals with disabilities to live independently in the communities of their choice and to eliminate barriers of attitude, architecture and communication from the environment.

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Vision Statement

Options sees a world where people with disabilities: enjoy the same human and civil rights as citizens without disabilities; live, attend school, work and play in an integrated accessible community; are respected citizens and community leaders; and face no attitudinal, architectural or communication barriers.

Text us Your Questions on our Text-Line at 701-864-0296

If you would like this newsletter in alternative formats, such as audio, braille or digital, please contact Mike or email options@myoptions.info.

If you would like to receive this newsletter and other publications by email submit your request to options@myoptions.info or call us.

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Always seek advice from qualified medical or legal professionals with questions which you may have to insure it is applicable to your situation.