



Press Release  
July 20th, 2021

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### **COVID-19 Vaccination Process, Sites Inaccessible for People with Disabilities**

*Disabled Michiganders find room for improvement regarding COVID-19 Vaccine Access*

Detroit, MI - This Spring, Detroit Disability Power surveyed 34 Michiganders with disabilities, and their caregivers, from 12 counties asking if their COVID-19 vaccination experience was accessible. 71% of residents responded that they experienced challenges accessing eligibility information, appointment registration, and/or vaccination sites.

Survey respondents described challenges such as lack of American Sign Language interpreter or inadequate communication, lack of accessible route from outside to inside and/or lack of accessibility at their site, lack of clear support, signage, or guidance at their site, lack of clear eligibility rules, confusing and inaccessible appointment registration, and lack of documenting of their disability status for the purpose of tracking and reporting data, or for eligibility issues related to medical conditions.

“People with disabilities weren’t factored into the pandemic response or vaccination campaigns until activists and advocates raised our voices,” said Dessa Cosma, executive director, Detroit Disability Power, “Still, progress is patchy, and we find inaccessible vaccination, the lack of disability-related data capture, tracking and reporting, the lack of protections against medical rationing, and the lack of proactive planning and coordination for our diverse disabilities unacceptable. With the highly contagious Delta variant now making up 83% of US COVID-19 cases, elected officials must make changes to better care for our disability communities this fall.”

There are over 1.4 million Michiganders with disabilities. However, there are currently no official numbers of how many Michiganders with disabilities have been infected with COVID-19, how many Michiganders with disabilities have died from COVID-19, or how many Michiganders with disabilities have been vaccinated against COVID-19 to date.

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