

Prevention of COVID-19: Modifications and Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID 19. The best way to prevent infection is to take steps to avoid exposure to this virus, which are similar to the steps you take to avoid the flu. Most people with disabilities will not have difficulty with the CDC guidelines for self-protection. However, people with moderate to significant levels of disability may need the following modifications or accommodations in order to implement these guidelines. Always ensure that these and other guidelines are communicated in accessible formats.

	Wash hands with soap and water.	Use hand sanitizer as backup.	Cover coughs and sneezes.	Avoid touching face.	Disinfect often touched surfaces.	Avoid close contact.
Cognitive Disabilities	 Ensure understanding of the length of time hands must be washed. Use a timer or other assistive device to time hand washing. Caregivers provide assistance and supervision so that hands are washed adequately and often. 		 Model correct procedures for covering coughs and sneezes. Provide facemasks for those who cannot perform these functions. 	 Explain the importance of keeping hands away from face. Caregivers provide assistance and supervision in washing hands and using hand sanitizer more frequently. 	 Model disinfection procedures. Model correct usage and storage of disinfectant products. Caregivers disinfect area for these individuals. 	 Replace caregivers and attendants who are sick and providing care. Assist with spatial separation from others. Model appropriate distance to keep from others.
Physical Disabilities	 Make adaptations to home environment to allow for frequent hand washing. Caregivers provide assistance so that hands are washed adequately and often. 	 Design accessible alternate hand sanitizing methods. Caregivers provide assistance in the use of hand sanitizer. 	 Design accessible alternate methods to cover face. Provide facemasks for those who cannot perform these functions. 	 No modifications or accommodations likely needed. 	 Design accessible alternate methods for disinfecting surfaces. Caregivers disinfect area for these individuals. 	 Replace caregivers and attendants who are sick and providing care. Assist with spatial separation from others.
Sensory Disabilities	 Provide guidelines in accessible format. 	 Provide guidelines in accessible format. 	 Provide guidelines in accessible format. 	 Provide guidelines in accessible format. 	 Provide assistance in identifying disinfectant products. Provide guidelines in accessible format. 	 Replace caregivers and attendants who are sick and providing care. Provide guidelines in accessible format.
ental Illness/ Behavioral Disabilities	 Ensure understanding of the importance of hand sanitation. Stress compliance with hand sanitation guidelines. 	 Ensure understanding of the importance of hand sanitation. Stress compliance with hand sanitation guidelines. 	 Ensure understanding of the importance of covering coughs and sneezes. Stress compliance with covering coughs and sneezes. 	 Ensure understanding of the importance of avoiding touching own face. Stress compliance with avoiding touching face. 	 Ensure understanding of the importance of disinfecting surfaces. Stress compliance with disinfectant procedures. 	 Replace caregivers and attendants who are sick and providing care.

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Health-Related Disabilities	 Make adaptations to home environment to allow for frequent hand washing. Caregivers provide assistance so that hands are washed adequately and often. 	 Design accessible alternate hand sanitizing methods. Caregivers provide assistance in the use of hand sanitizer. 	 Design accessible alternate methods to cover face. Provide facemasks for those who cannot perform these functions. 	 No modifications or accommodations likely needed. 	 Design accessible alternate methods for disinfecting surfaces. 	 Caregivers disinfect area for these individuals. Replace caregivers and attendants who are sick and providing care

Social Distancing:

Some individuals with disabilities will experience difficulty following social distancing guidelines if they require personal assistance from a caregiver or family member for activities of daily living. Some individuals with cognitive disabilities, in particular, may not be able to maintain a six foot distance from others without assistance or supervision. Everyone should wear a facemask when they have to go out in public. A facemask is not a substitute for social distancing.

Developed by Project REDD and the Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University | redd.tamu.edu