



Department of Aging and  
Disability Services



Division of Emergency Management  
and Homeland Security

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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Monday, June 8th, 2020

## **Language Translation & Interpretation, and Accommodations at Testing Sites in the State of Connecticut**

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

As part of Connecticut's emergency response framework, Emergency Support Function (ESF)-15 is responsible for public information, including outreach to diverse communities. ESF 15 coordinates with state agencies, non-profits, and private sector partners to ensure that diverse and historically diverse communities have access to the information they need during the COVID-19 pandemic – including information at testing sites, and about testing sites.

The purpose of this document is to make sure that COVID-19 testing sites are aware of the needs of diverse communities in order to access the sites effectively.

Increasing reliable testing capacity remains one of the Lamont administration's priorities during this public health crisis.

#### *Connecticut's Diversity*

Connecticut is home to many cultures and many spoken and written languages: the most common are Spanish (over 500 thousand, and many in dual language households), Polish (over 30,000), and Portuguese (over 10,000 in Danbury alone, and more than 30,000 statewide).

There are other, primarily geographically isolated, languages spoken in the state: Italian, Hindi, Urdu, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, French, French Creole, Thai, and others spoken in smaller communities.

It is important to remember that it is not just the translation of individual words, but the ability to address the individual cultural references as well.

#### *The Undocumented Community*

As with other community members, undocumented residents of Connecticut are deeply affected by this pandemic. It is important that all community members have access to accurate information about their rights to health care, social service assistance, housing and education.

## *Older Americans*

Older Americans and those who need accommodation may be among the most vulnerable during the COVID-19 public health emergency. It's critically important that they have access to the healthcare, and testing they need to stay healthy, and make appropriate health care plans.

## **RESOURCES**

- For support finding translation or interpretation services including Sign Language interpreters, please call 2-1-1 or visit [www.ct211.org](http://www.ct211.org). If your organization already has video or telephone remote interpreting at your testing location, you can continue to use those existing services. ***Anyone who is out-of-state or using Relay can connect to Connecticut 2-1-1 toll free by dialing [1-800-203-1234](tel:1-800-203-1234).***
- Guidelines to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities consistent with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) can be found in Title III of the ADA at <https://www.ada.gov/>.
- There are many general resources for people with disabilities available on the COVID-19 website at <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/Information-For/Individuals-with-Disabilities>.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS**

- If your testing site has questions, and would like to contact the State, please reach out to your Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) Regional Coordinator. DEMHS regional information can be found at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEMHS/Emergency-Management/Resources-For-Officials/Regional-Offices>.

## **UPDATING TESTING SITE INFORMATION**

- If there are updates to testing sites in the state, those sites should update their information by using this form on United Way 211's website: <https://uwc.211ct.org/contact/testing-site-registration/>.

*Thank you for working to ensure your COVID-19 testing sites are accessible to all Connecticut residents during this challenging time.*