

IMPACT REPORT

Moving forward through COVID



Access Living has been on the front lines supporting people with disabilities during the pandemic. Our community is one of the fastest growing and most diverse segments of Chicago's population. Many disabled people—especially those in Chicago's Black and Brown communities—are at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19, experiencing severe symptoms and dying.

The pandemic has amplified the many disparities that people with disabilities have long faced. Access Living has confronted these disparities head-on to protect the rights and meet the human needs of our community in these unprecedented times.

Together, we —

- Provided immediate, direct financial relief to 120 Chicagoans with disabilities impacted by the pandemic—covering the costs of vital necessities like food, rent and utilities.
- Built a nationally recognized and comprehensive [COVID-19 online resource page](#) for people with disabilities.
- Established an emergency personal assistant backup referral program so that disabled people who need in-home personal care could have access during COVID stay-at-home orders.
- Mobilized advocates to send 5,500 emails to members of Congress to include the needs of disabled people nationwide in federal COVID-19 relief funds.
- Advocated for public-school students with disabilities—in Chicago and across Illinois—to have equal access to remote learning, and increased supports and services during school building closures.
- Transitioned disabled people out of nursing homes and into their own homes—safely and even with the challenge of COVID restrictions—ultimately saving lives.
- Worked with the Pritzker Administration to prioritize COVID-19 vaccines for people with disabilities and to issue guidance to hospitals prohibiting disability related discrimination in COVID-19 treatment.
- Assisted more than 250 disabled people in securing accessible appointments for vaccinations in Chicago, and advised the City on its in-home vaccination program, the accessibility of its COVID-19 webpages and its vaccination process.
- Launched targeted disability outreach campaigns to push for greater vaccination rates among people with disabilities.

As our cities and states reopen, our work will now center on an equitable recovery that includes the needs of disabled people. Together, we are working to ensure that people with disabilities are not overlooked and creating a more inclusive world that we all need and deserve.



www.AccessLiving.org

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