



May 28, 2021

Dear Ms. Patterson and Ms. Bennewith:

Thank you and the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Health Task Force for your April 8, 2021, correspondence highlighting issues facing the disability community in COVID-19 vaccination efforts and providing recommendations for actions that HHS can take. Your views are important to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and our Departmental partners as we continue to implement the President's National Strategy for an equitable pandemic response.

As you know, both OCR and the Department have taken significant actions since your letter. On April 13, 2021, we issued guidance and a fact sheet on disability rights law and vaccine accessibility, clarifying relevant federal legal standards regarding disability discrimination in COVID-19 vaccination programs. This guidance covers disability non-discrimination requirements in the administration, eligibility criteria and methods of administration of vaccination programs, including the right of people with disabilities to reasonable modification when necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability and the obligations of covered entities regarding effective communication and program accessibility. We coupled the guidance with resources and best practices from our sister agencies, including the Administration on Community Living, who, in partnership with the CDC, has provided close to \$100 million to assist with scheduling, transportation, and direct service supports to help people with disabilities and older adults get vaccinations. We also have been holding a number of webinars about our efforts and have joined with other federal partners in listening sessions.

We appreciate CCD's ongoing work to raise critical issues and encourage you to continue to bring recommendations to us and to work with those you represent to file complaints with our office if they believe they have been discriminated against by health or human services providers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robinsue Frohboese".

Robinsue Frohboese, J.D., Ph.D.
Acting Director and Principal Deputy Director