



LAURA KELLY, Governor • KATHY KECK, Chairperson • STEVE GIEBER, Executive Director

*“To empower individuals with I/DD and their families to lead systems change, build capacity, and advocate for inclusive, integrated, accessible communities where everyone belongs and thrives.”*

The Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities (KCDD) is pleased to announce the availability of funding for initiatives that will address COVID-19 concerns and increase access to COVID-19 vaccines for people among the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) population who reside in Kansas, that include individuals with I/DD, their families, and those that work directly with them.

## **Background**

Approximately 61 million adults living within the U.S. have a disability, representing approximately 26 percent of the adult population. People with disabilities may have an increased risk for contracting COVID-19 based on where they live or the services they receive. Some people with disabilities live in group settings which places them at higher risk for acquiring COVID-19 in comparison to people without disabilities. People with disabilities may also require close contact with direct service providers, including personal care attendants or other care providers, who help with activities of daily living. People with disabilities work in the community, attend day programs, attend schools, live at home independently or with support, or may be homebound. Moreover, many people with disabilities have underlying health conditions (e.g. diabetes, heart disease, and obesity) that increases the risk of severe illness due to COVID-19. In addition, research has also found that people with Down Syndrome are significantly more likely to be hospitalized from COVID-19 than the general population. There are increasing reports of barriers and unequal access in communities to vaccinate people with disabilities. For example, some people with disabilities may experience difficulties scheduling appointments, communicating, obtaining accessible transportation, or require direct support services to attend vaccination appointments. Others living in the community may be isolated or unable to leave their home and may require in-home vaccination. In addition, according to the National Center on Biotechnology Information, people with disabilities and those that support them personally and professionally may avoid getting the COVID-19 vaccine due to hesitancy.

## **Purpose of this Funding Initiative**

The purpose of this funding initiative is to provide needed supports to people with disabilities who reside in Kansas that will increase the number of vaccinations for people with disabilities and those that support them personally and professionally; and/or address the vaccine hesitancy in identified communities of people with disabilities throughout Kansas.

## **Project Requirements**

1. Projects will identify and describe their targeted unvaccinated, or not fully vaccinated population and have a strategy to reach and engage them.
2. Projects will identify the specific assistance and support needed by targeted individuals to reach project goals for people being vaccinated.

And/Or

1. Projects will identify where vaccine hesitancy persists among communities of people with disabilities, their families, and those that work directly with them throughout Kansas.
2. Projects will identify how they will educate individuals about the vaccine to bust myths and address hesitancy in accessible formats that could also include languages other than English as needed.

**Ideas for project activities include, but are not limited to:**

- Seeking out and identifying people with disabilities and those who support them who are unable to independently travel to vaccine sites
- Providing education about the importance of receiving the vaccine
- Helping with scheduling vaccine appointments
  - Can be completed by using existing free vaccination sites
  - Setting up vaccine sites
  - Connecting to and arranging vaccines for individuals who are homebound through in-home vaccine options
- Arranging and providing accessible transportation
- Providing companion/personal supports through each stage from scheduling to receipt of final shot
- Providing technical assistance to local health departments or other entities necessary on accessibility of vaccine sites
- Addressing vaccine hesitancy and busting myths about the vaccine
- Providing the above information in accessible formats that could also include languages other than English as needed

**Funding Amount**

A total of \$30,000 is available to fund a minimum of 6 projects at up to \$5,000 each.

**Funding Timeframe**

Activities can start immediately after the submitted projects are approved by the KCDD Council. The activity period for the funds will end on September 30, 2022.

**Evaluation Data**

Upon completion of the funded initiative, projects will provide KCDD with a written report that summarizes the project's activities throughout the funded initiative. This report should describe:

- What the initiative accomplished
- What progress was made toward achieving the initiative's goals
- Any success stories or impact stories noted as a direct result of the initiative
- The number of individuals directly impacted by the initiative (if possible)
- Any problems or obstacles encountered throughout the project's initiative

**How to Submit a Proposal**

If you or your organization is interested in submitting a proposal for consideration, please complete the application form listed on the KCDD website under the Unsolicited Proposals page here:

<https://kcdd.org/call-for-investments/unsolicited-proposals>

If you have questions, need additional assistance, require an accommodation completing the application, or need an alternate application format, please contact Jeff Schroeder at [jschroeder@kcdd.org](mailto:jschroeder@kcdd.org)