

Disability-related COVID-19 Responses by ESCAP Member States and Associate Members in Asia and the Pacific

May 2021

This issue paper aims to provide a compilation of disability-related COVID-19 responses and useful links by governments of ESCAP member States and associate members in Asia and the Pacific. Responses are clustered in line with the six recommendations in the ESCAP policy brief “Ensuring Disability Rights and Inclusion in the Response to COVID-19”¹:

- Recommendation 1: Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships;
- Recommendation 2: Continued access to goods and services;
- Recommendation 3: Accessible public information;
- Recommendation 4: Medical and quarantine policies and processes;
- Recommendation 5: Social protection and employment support; and
- Recommendation 6: Institutions and facilities.

Different combinations of keywords such as “COVID-19”, “coronavirus”, “persons with disabilities”, “disability”, and “vulnerable groups” were used to find available online resources. Special attention was paid to the websites of national news agencies, government disability focal points, and ministries in charge of health, human rights, or social protection. Additionally, the COVID-19 portals of ILO², IMF³, and KPMG⁴ were checked to complement the existing information.

Due to the limited publicity of disability-related responses and the evolving situation of the pandemic, the measures cannot be considered as exhaustive, definitive, or in any way binding and do not reflect the views or position of ESCAP. The reference to each measure is provided; however, we cannot guarantee the accuracy and quality of every resource.

To provide more information on disability-related COVID-19 responses or to rectify any inaccuracies, please contact escap-sdd@un.org.

¹ <https://www.unescap.org/resources/policy-brief-covid-19-and-person-disabilities>

² <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm>

³ <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19>

⁴ <https://home.kpmg/xx/en/home/insights/2020/04/government-response-global-landscape.html>

I. RESPONSES BY ESCAP MEMBER STATES

Afghanistan

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [13 March 2020] The Ministry of Public Health has released Afghanistan's COVID-19 Emergency Response: Environmental and Social Commitment Plan, which ensures that individuals and groups who may be disadvantaged or vulnerable have access to development projects.⁵
- [13 March 2020] In the Preliminary Stakeholder Engagement Plan of the Afghanistan COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project, special attention is given to persons with disabilities among other vulnerable groups: to give them a voice to express their views, to take into account their needs in activities, and to raise awareness in communities.⁶
- [30 May 2020] In a virtual government meeting, President Ashraf Ghani instructed institutions to create a database of poor people and people in need so that the government could best help them alleviate their hardship.⁷

Social protection and employment support

- [29 April 2020] The government in Kabul has started providing free bread for approximately 2.5 million people in need.⁸
- [30 May 2020] In a virtual government meeting, President Ashraf Ghani said the government was working on assistance packages to provide essential items for poor people and people in need.⁹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Public Health: <https://moph.gov.af/en/fighting-against-covid-19-directorate>

Disability focal point

- Disability Office, Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled: <https://molisa.gov.af/en>

Armenia

⁵ https://moph.gov.af/sites/default/files/2020-03/ESCP_PostNegotiations_AF-COVID-19_%20ERHSPP%20Project_%20P173775.pdf

⁶ https://moph.gov.af/sites/default/files/2020-03/SEP_Afghanistan%20COVID-19_clean_For%20Negs.pdf

⁷ <https://president.gov.af/en/government-leadership-discusses-bread-distribution-initiative-additional-efforts-to-fight-covid-19/>

⁸ <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19#A>

⁹ <https://president.gov.af/en/government-leadership-discusses-bread-distribution-initiative-additional-efforts-to-fight-covid-19/>

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[16 March 2020]** The Armenian Red Cross Society is part of the national response mechanism, which is set up under the auspices of the Deputy Prime Minister. Its risk communication materials and community strategies consider issues concerning domestic violence, child protection, and working with persons with disabilities and migrants.¹⁰

Continued access to goods and services

- **[19 May 2020]** The Armenian Red Cross Society psychosocial support centres still operate in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in Yerevan, providing particular support for older persons and persons with disabilities. From March to May, staff responded to 15,618 calls, and volunteers visited and helped around 500 people. Additionally, the Armenian Red Cross Society took over the management of a 24-hour care centre in May in the city of Gyumri.¹¹

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[11 March 2021]** Residents and employees of nursing homes, older persons and persons with chronic conditions would be prioritized in the early stages of the vaccine roll-out.¹²

Social protection and employment support

- **[18 March 2020]** The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has taken measures to ensure that there would be no delays in the payment of pensions and benefits. Pensions and cash benefits would be delivered to beneficiaries' homes.¹³
- **[18 March 2020]** The deadline for fulfilling the obligations concerning pensions and benefits has been extended.¹⁴
- **[27 March 2020]** The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has been planning for the provision of food and other protective measures for those who are more than 50 years old and persons with disabilities for two months.¹⁵
- **[27 April 2020]** The Armenian government has provided financial assistance to lessen the burden of the COVID-19 crisis. For families that receive a family and social benefit, extra support has been given in an amount of 50 per cent of the benefit. Within this, 70 per cent has been provided in cash along with the benefit, and 30 per cent has been available as a payment for the energy consumed by the receiver.¹⁶
- **[6 May 2020]** From April to May, the Armenian Red Cross Society expected to support 15,000 vulnerable people across the country with basic food and hygiene aid. The list of recipients was provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.¹⁷

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website (in Armenian): <https://www.gov.am/am/commandant-decisions>
- Armenian National Center for Disease Control (in Armenian): <https://ncdc.am>
- Ministry of Health (in Armenian): <http://www.moh.am>

¹⁰ <https://www.redcross.am/en/news/coronavirus-arcs-activities.html>

¹¹ <https://www.redcross.am/en/news/coronavirus-arcs-activities.html>

¹² <https://jam-news.net/armenia-enters-into-yet-another-coronavirus-wave/>

¹³ <https://www.gov.am/ru/news/item/9676/>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.am/ru/news/item/9676/>

¹⁵ http://unrpd.org/sites/default/files/Overview%20response_1.4.pdf

¹⁶ <https://home.kpmg/xx/en/home/insights/2020/04/armenia-government-and-institution-measures-in-response-to-covid.html>

¹⁷ <https://www.redcross.am/en/news/coronavirus-arcs-activities.html>

Disability focal point

- Disabled and Elderly Issues Department, Ministry of Labor and Social Issues (in Armenian): <http://www.mlsa.am>

Australia

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[April 2020]** The Department of Health has released the Management and Operational Plan for People with Disability. The plan aims to ensure that the healthcare needs of persons with disabilities can be met during the pandemic.¹⁸

Continued access to goods and services

- **[n.d.]** The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has used several online matching platforms to connect persons with disabilities with support workers. Also, it has been working with supermarkets to ensure priority home delivery of goods for persons with disabilities.¹⁹
- **[n.d.]** Providers delivering essential daily life services to NDIS participants could claim PPE for support workers.²⁰
- **[n.d.]** Resources for learning from home during school closures, including suggestions for students with disabilities, have been created on a state-by-state basis.²¹
- **[27 April 2020]** Eligible participants in NDIS could flexibly use the funding to purchase low-cost Assistive Technology, including smart devices. This enables persons with disabilities to have continued access to disability supports while practising social distancing.²²
- **[27 April 2020]** Almost \$600 million has been paid in one-month advance payments to nearly 5,000 NDIS service providers to offer immediate cashflow relief and ensure the continuation of services.²³
- **[18 June 2020]** The Department of Health has created a COVID-19 Risk Management Plan specifically for students with disabilities returning to schools.²⁴

Accessible public information

- **[n.d.]** Government agencies, such as the NDIS²⁵, the Department of Social Services²⁶, and the Department of Health²⁷, provide accessible information in several formats,

¹⁸ <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/management-and-operational-plan-for-people-with-disability>

¹⁹ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus/latest-advice-ndis>

²⁰ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/price-guides-and-pricing#price-guide-covid-19-response-summary>

²¹ <https://www.dese.gov.au/covid-19/schools/support-students-disability>

²² <https://www.ndis.gov.au/news/4758-further-initiatives-support-ndis-participants-and-providers-during-coronavirus-pandemic>

²³ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/news/4758-further-initiatives-support-ndis-participants-and-providers-during-coronavirus-pandemic>

²⁴ <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/return-to-school-for-students-with-disability-covid-19-risk-management-plan>

²⁵ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus>

²⁶ <https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/information-and-referrals-for-people-with-disability-and-their-supporters-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

²⁷ <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/advice-for-people-at-risk-of-coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-people-with-disability>

- **[n.d.]** The Department of Health has established a Disability Gateway²⁸ to provide accessible information on COVID-19.²⁹
- **[n.d.]** Accessible resources are provided by the Department of Health regarding the vaccination process for persons with disabilities.³⁰

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[12 June 2020]** The Department of Health has created a specific tool to assist persons with disabilities to convey important personal information to healthcare staff should they be in hospitals throughout the pandemic.³¹
- **[22 February 2021]** Persons with disabilities have been prioritized in the vaccination process.³²

Social protection and employment support

- **[n.d.]** A one-off deep cleaning payment has been funded by NDIS in the situation that a support worker diagnosed with COVID-19 entered a person's home.³³
- **[17 April 2020]** One-time cash payment of AUD 750 per person has been available for persons receiving disability supports and carer payments.³⁴

Institutions and facilities

- **[n.d.]** Persons living in Supported Independent Living (SIL) arrangements are at higher risk due to the SIL environment and other existing health conditions. Cleaning services and additional self-isolation and COVID-19 diagnosis supports have been available.³⁵
- **[22 February 2021]** Persons with disabilities living in residential settings have been prioritized in the vaccine roll-out, along with workers in residential accommodations. In-reach vaccination team has visited the residences.³⁶

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website: <https://www.australia.gov.au>
- Disability Gateway: <https://www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/coronavirus>
- Department of Health: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>
- Department of Social Services: <https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/information-and-referrals-for-people-with-disability-and-their-supporters-about-coronavirus-covid-19>
- National Disability Insurance Agency: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus>

²⁸ <https://www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/coronavirus>

²⁹ <https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/information-and-referrals-for-people-with-disability-and-their-supporters-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

³⁰ <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-vaccinated-for-covid-19/information-for-people-with-disability-about-covid-19-vaccines#easy-read-resources>

³¹ <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-hospital-companion-for-people-with-disability>

³² <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/information-for-covid-19-vaccination-providers/covid-19-vaccine-information-for-disability-service-providers#covid19-vaccine-priority-groups>

³³ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/price-guides-and-pricing#price-guide-covid-19-response-summary>

³⁴ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/33635/Social-Protection-and-Jobs-Responses-to-COVID-19-A-Real-Time-Review-of-Country-Measures-April-17-2020.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

³⁵ <https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/housing-and-living-supports-and-services/housing/supported-independent-living#coronavirus-covid-19-cases-in-sil>

³⁶ <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/information-for-covid-19-vaccination-providers/covid-19-vaccine-information-for-disability-service-providers#covid19-vaccine-priority-groups>

Disability focal point

- Disability, Employment & Carers Group, Department of Social Services:
<https://www.dss.gov.au>

Azerbaijan

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[1 April 2020]** In the message to the state and local self-governing institutions, business entities and other organizations, the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) emphasized the duty to protect persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.³⁷
- **[19 June 2020]** The Ombudsman Office has held a series of awareness-raising events devoted to the rights of young people, mentioning the principles of proportionality, necessity, and non-discrimination during the COVID-19 pandemic. One event was dedicated to the rights of children and young persons with disabilities.³⁸

Social protection and employment support

- **[n.d.]** There has been an extension of the term of disability that expired on 1 March 2020, lasting until the end of the quarantine period. This measure has covered 14,000 people, and AZN 2.6 million has been allocated for this purpose.³⁹
- **[15 April 2020]** The government has announced that it would pay 50 per cent of the tuition fees for vulnerable students studying at universities and specialized secondary and vocational schools. The beneficiaries include recipients of targeted state social assistance and persons whose parents have I or II degree disabilities.⁴⁰
- **[16 April 2020]** The Ombudsman has supported low-income families in Baku and other regions, with food package deliveries to persons aged over 65 and persons with disabilities who live alone.⁴¹
- **[27 July 2020]** The average monthly pension has been increased by 27 per cent in the first six months of 2020, reaching \$176.4. The beneficiaries include 380,900 persons with disabilities.⁴²
- **[9 September 2020]** Social programmes, such as the self-employment programme, have been continued amid the pandemic. The Ministry of Labor and Social Protection has taken measures to increase access of persons with disabilities to the labour market and small businesses by developing specialized profile tests, modular training programmes, and professional standards for persons with disabilities.⁴³

³⁷ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.az/en/view/news/1786/message-of-the-commissioner-for-human-rights-ombudsman-of-the-republic-of-azerbaijan-to-the-state-and-local-self-governing-institutions-officials-and-other-offices-enterprises-organizations-and-busine>

³⁸ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.az/en/view/news/1913/ombudsman-office-held-a-series-of-awareness-raising-events->

³⁹ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#AZ>

⁴⁰ https://www.azernews.az/news.php?news_id=164092&cat=nation

⁴¹ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.az/en/view/news/1810/ombudsman-office-provided-food-aid-to-low-income-families>

⁴² https://www.azernews.az/news.php?news_id=167417&cat=nation

⁴³ https://www.azernews.az/news.php?news_id=168764&cat=nation

Institutions and facilities

- [n.d.] Social services have been provided for persons with special needs in social service institutions and facilities.⁴⁴

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19 (in Azerbaijani): <https://koronavirusinfo.az>
- Ministry of Health (in Azerbaijani): <http://www.sehiyye.gov.az>

Disability focal point

- Department for Policy on Social Protection of People with Disabilities, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population (in Azerbaijani): <http://www.mlsp.gov.az>

Bangladesh

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [16 March 2020] In the National Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19, it is mentioned that targeted approaches will be developed to reach all social groups with risk communication and services, considering gender, age, disability, education, and migration status.⁴⁵
- [2 April 2020] The Bangladesh government, UNDP, and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) have started a joint initiative to protect 2.16 million urban vulnerable persons, including persons with disabilities, from the impact of COVID-19. The initiative includes awareness campaigns, the distribution of hygiene packages, and the installation of 2,500 handwashing facilities in twenty city corporations, municipalities, and other communities.⁴⁶
- [27 October 2020] Australia has announced its COVID-19 Development Response Plan for Bangladesh 2020-21 and 2021-22.⁴⁷ Dhaka and Canberra will work in partnership to ensure the plan remains closely aligned with Bangladesh's development initiatives. The protection of the most vulnerable, including women and girls and persons with disabilities, is a priority in the plan.⁴⁸
- [8 March 2021] The COVID-19 Emergency Pandemic Preparedness and Response Project has been updated with additional financing for vaccination. There are strategies to engage vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities.⁴⁹

Accessible public information

- [4 February 2021] Health bulletins and COVID-19 related announcements are accompanied by sign language interpretation services.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang-en/index.htm#AZ>

⁴⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/national-preparedness-and-response-plan-covid-19-bangladesh>

⁴⁶ <https://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2020/04/02/govt-undp-and-dfid-joint-initiative-to-protect-2-16m-urban-poor.html>

⁴⁷ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/development/bangladesh-covid-19-development-response-plan>

⁴⁸ <https://www.bssnews.net/?p=475460>

⁴⁹ <https://dghs.gov.bd/index.php/en/home/5675-additional-financing-for-restructuring-of-covid-19-emergency-response-and-pandemic-preparedness-project>

⁵⁰ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/-social-protection-covid19>

Social protection and employment support

- **[1 June 2020]** ADD International's COVID-19 Update has noted that nearly 13,500 persons with disabilities have received assistance, such as emergency grants, from the government, NGOs, or individuals.⁵¹
- **[22 June 2020]** Under the social safety net programme, nearly Tk 26.5 crore (including allowances paid in advance) has been distributed among 8 million beneficiaries that include insolvent persons with disabilities and students with disabilities.⁵²
- **[30 September 2020]** The coverage of the Old Age Allowances, the Allowances for Destitute Women, and the Allowances for Disabled Persons has been expanded to include 1.7 million more new beneficiaries.⁵³
- **[4 February 2021]** A general cash allowance has been extended to persons with disabilities who did not receive disability specific allowances.⁵⁴

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19: <https://corona.gov.bd>
- Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research: <https://iedcr.gov.bd/covid-19/covid-19-general-information>

Disability focal point

- Department of Social Services, Ministry of Social Welfare: <https://msw.gov.bd>

Bhutan

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[n.d.]** The Technical Advisory Group for COVID-19 has engaged high-risk communities for COVID-19 prevention and control. The mapping of vulnerable groups in the communities has included older persons and persons living with comorbidities and disabilities.⁵⁵
- **[9 April 2020]** Bhutan's COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project, which includes persons with disabilities as stakeholders, has been announced.⁵⁶
- **[14 April 2020]** Persons with disabilities have been requested to register with the Ministry of Health, acknowledging the fact that they are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.⁵⁷
- **[26 August 2020]** Special movement passes⁵⁸ have been issued to persons with disabilities.⁵⁹

⁵¹ <https://www.add.org.uk/covid-19-update-6>

⁵² <https://www.bssnews.net/?p=410106>

⁵³

https://www.un.org/ohrlls/sites/www.un.org.ohrlls/files/bangladesh_report_on_covid_19_and_way_forward-20_october_2020.pdf

⁵⁴ <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/-social-protection-covid19>

⁵⁵ <http://www.moh.gov.bt/engagement-of-high-risk-communities-for-covid-19-prevention-control/>

⁵⁶ <http://www.moh.gov.bt/bhutan-covid-19-emergency-response-and-health-systems-preparedness-project/>

⁵⁷ <http://www.moh.gov.bt/announcement-registration-for-persons-with-disabilities/>

⁵⁸ <http://absbhutan.org/distribution-of-special-movement-pass/>

⁵⁹ <https://kuenselonline.com/persons-with-disabilities-to-get-special-movement-pass/>

Continued access to goods and services

- **[12 December 2020]** A population mapping of persons with disabilities has been carried out to ensure that essential and emergency services could reach them without interruption.⁶⁰

Accessible public information

- **[n.d.]** The Ministry of Health provides daily updates via its Facebook page, with live press briefings aided by a sign language interpreter.⁶¹

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[4 July 2020]** Ability Bhutan Society, Draktsho, Disabled Persons' Association of Bhutan (DPAB), National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC), and the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) have conducted a three-day disability equality workshop for frontline workers. The participants, including health workers, Members of Parliament, and educationists, have been made aware of the needs of persons with disabilities, the proper ways to render help, and the usage of appropriate terminologies.⁶²

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19: <https://www.gov.bt/covid19>
- Ministry of Health: <http://www.moh.gov.bt>

Disability focal point

- Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health: <http://www.moh.gov.bt>

Brunei Darussalam

Government responses

Continued access to goods and services

- **[7 June 2020]** Childcare centres and centres for persons with disabilities have restarted operations upon the approval of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, with several terms and guidelines in place.⁶³

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health: <http://www.moh.gov.bn/SitePages/COVID-19.aspx>

Disability focal point

- Department of Community Development, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (in Malay): <http://www.kkbs.gov.bn/Theme/Home.aspx>

⁶⁰ https://www.nab.gov.bt/assets/uploads/images/news/2020/State_of_the_Nation_2020.pdf

⁶¹ <https://www.facebook.com/MoHBhutan/>

⁶² <https://kuenselonline.com/training-frontline-personnel-to-deal-with-persons-with-disabilities-and-victims-of-gender-based-violence/>

⁶³ <https://www.thestar.com.my/aseanplus/aseanplus-news/2020/06/07/brunei-opens-up-centres-for-child-care-people-with-different-abilities-on-monday-june-8>

Cambodia

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [27 August 2020] The Cambodian Disabled People's Organization has held a meeting with government officials and persons with disabilities, discussing challenges faced by persons with disabilities during the pandemic and solutions to their problems.⁶⁴
- [August 2020] The United Nations has laid out plans to work with the Cambodian government to survey persons with disabilities on the impact of COVID-19.⁶⁵
- [October 2020] Australia and Cambodia have been working together on a COVID-19 Development Response Plan which places emphasis on including persons with disabilities.⁶⁶

Continued access to goods and services

- [n.d.] The All Children Reading Cambodia project has worked with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport to create accessible online resources for children with disabilities, to help them and their families implement home schooling.⁶⁷

Accessible public information

- [16 April 2020] Cambodian sign language interpreters of the Maryknoll Deaf Development Programme have provided interpretation in educational videos created by the Cambodian government. Additionally, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the WHO, sign language interpreters have helped create a video that specifically addresses the needs of the deaf population.⁶⁸
- [13 July 2020] Australian Aid has been working with the Cambodian government to ensure that persons with disabilities have accessible information on COVID-19.⁶⁹

Social protection and employment support

- [n.d.] In response to the pandemic, the government has launched a new monthly cash transfer programme for poor and vulnerable households.⁷⁰
- [1 June 2020] The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts has mobilized an aid programme for the Music Association of the Disabled, including KHR1,220,000, 500 kg rice and other food items.⁷¹
- [27 August 2020] The government has offered social protection, such as cash transfers and provisions, to persons with disabilities holding an IDPoor Card.⁷²

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health: <http://moh.gov.kh/?lang=en>

Disability focal point

- Disability Action Council: website unavailable

⁶⁴ <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50757680/disabled-community-calls-for-more-help-during-covid-19/>

⁶⁵ <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/un-cambodia-framework-immediate-socio-economic-response-covid-19>

⁶⁶ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/development/cambodia-covid-19-development-response-plan>

⁶⁷ <https://www.rti.org/impact/cambodian-students-learn-at-home-during-covid-19>

⁶⁸ <https://cruxnow.com/church-in-asia/2020/04/maryknoll-program-in-cambodia-provides-sign-language-for-covid-19-videos/>

⁶⁹ <https://cambodia.embassy.gov.au/files/penh/20200706-Fact-sheets-on-Australian-Support-for-Cambodians-COVID-19-Eng.pdf>

⁷⁰ <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19#C>

⁷¹ <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50729071/charity-program-benefits-people-with-disabilities/>

⁷² <https://www.khmertimeskh.com/50757680/disabled-community-calls-for-more-help-during-covid-19/>

China

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[24 April 2020]** The China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF) has published a series of online articles based on stories of grassroots Disabled Persons' Federations and workers with disabilities, showing how they have supported persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁷³
- **[27 May 2020]** CDPF, the Ministry of Finance and three other government agencies have jointly issued guidelines on the well-being of persons with disabilities amid the pandemic.⁷⁴
- **[30 October 2020]** In the early days of the COVID-19 outbreak, a hotline for persons with disabilities was established to enable them to contact local pandemic decision-making teams, who were held accountable for responding to reasonable requests quickly.⁷⁵

Continued access to goods and services

- **[23 March 2020]** Rehabilitation institutions in Inner Mongolia Province have provided online training courses for children with autism, down syndrome, and other disabilities to ensure that they would receive an education despite the suspension of schools.⁷⁶
- **[1 April 2020]** Civil affairs authorities have handed out daily necessities and medical supplies to people experiencing difficulties. The authorities have also taken care of older persons and persons with disabilities whose guardians or caregivers are under quarantine or medical treatment.⁷⁷
- **[19 May 2020]** CDPF has issued a notice on institution services, recommending that offline services could be gradually resumed alongside online services in low-risk areas, but that rehabilitation centres for children with disabilities should not resume operation earlier than local nurseries.⁷⁸
- **[8 January 2021]** Community workers, health workers, and those work in elderly care and sanitation industries have been prioritized in the vaccination programme.⁷⁹

Accessible public information

- **[n.d.]** CDPF has established a dedicated website on COVID-19 to post news and good practices.⁸⁰
- **[16 March 2020]** CDPF has produced home-based rehabilitation exercise videos and a series of courses on psychological adjustments in collaboration with the China Braille Press.⁸¹
- **[20 April 2020]** At a news conference on COVID-19, a staff member of the Beijing Disabled Persons' Federation offered sign language interpretation services and wore a transparent

⁷³ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202004/t20200424_674712.shtml

⁷⁴ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202005/t20200527_675136.shtml

⁷⁵ <https://www.dovepress.com/guaranteeing-the-health-rights-of-people-with-disabilities-in-the-covi-peer-reviewed-article-RMHP>

⁷⁶ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202003/t20200323_674299.shtml

⁷⁷ http://english.www.gov.cn/statecouncil/ministries/202004/01/content_WS5e847f4bc6d0c201c2cbff05.html

⁷⁸ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202005/t20200519_674984.shtml

⁷⁹ http://en.nhc.gov.cn/2021-01/08/c_82699.htm

⁸⁰ <http://subsites.chinadaily.com.cn/en/CDPFFightAgainstCOVID-19.html>

⁸¹ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202003/t20200316_674245.shtml

mask to assist lip readers. The Federation has provided 24-hour inquiry services via mobile applications such as WeChat.⁸²

- [2 June 2020] CDPF has developed accessible video materials to help persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 crisis.⁸³

Social protection and employment support

- [7 March 2020] The government has mandated all allowances to be paid on time, including the allowance for persons with severe disabilities and the nursing allowance. The amount would be increased appropriately in areas where the pandemic situation has been serious.⁸⁴
- [16 March 2020] CDPF has issued a notice requiring Disabled Persons' federations at all levels to ensure the employment and basic livelihoods of persons with disabilities. It has been announced that rent subsidies, living subsidies, and relief subsidies should be granted to assist disability employment units such as blind massage workshops, auxiliary employment institutions, and individual businesses of persons with disabilities.⁸⁵
- [16 March 2020] CDPF has stated that enterprises should be encouraged through job stabilization measures and recruitment subsidies from the government to stabilize the employment of persons with disabilities.⁸⁶
- [23 March 2020] In Hubei Province, CDPF has reported that grassroots working groups have assisted persons with disabilities by bringing them anti-pandemic materials.⁸⁷
- [23 March 2020] The disabled service centre in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province has set up an online recruitment service platform for persons with disabilities.⁸⁸
- [1 April 2020] Over 35 million yuan (about \$4.94 million) has been offered as special allowances to more than 13,000 people living with difficulties in Hubei Province.⁸⁹
- [15 April 2020] CDPF has announced that a further 53 billion yuan (\$7.5 billion) would be allocated for a relief package targeting vulnerable groups. The funding would form part of the state benefits to cover basic living expenses.⁹⁰
- [22 May 2020] Further guidelines for safeguarding the employment of persons with disabilities in the wake of the pandemic have been released.⁹¹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website:
<http://english.www.gov.cn/2020special/5e32830ec6d019625c60433b/fightagainstcoronavirus>
- China Disabled Persons' Federation:
<http://subsites.chinadaily.com.cn/en/CDPFFightAgainstCOVID-19.html>

Disability focal point

- Department of International Affairs, China Disabled Persons' Federation:
<http://english.cdpf.org.cn>

⁸² http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202004/t20200420_674572.shtml

⁸³ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202006/t20200602_675197.shtml

⁸⁴ http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2020-03/07/content_5488352.htm

⁸⁵ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202003/t20200316_674242.shtml

⁸⁶ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202003/t20200316_674242.shtml

⁸⁷ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202003/t20200323_674299.shtml

⁸⁸ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202003/t20200323_674299.shtml

⁸⁹ http://english.www.gov.cn/statecouncil/ministries/202004/01/content_WS5e847f4bc6d0c201c2cbff05.html

⁹⁰ http://english.cdpf.org.cn/MediaCenter/updates2/202004/t20200415_674503.shtml

⁹¹ http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2020-05/26/content_5515061.htm

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (the)

Government responses

If you have any information on disability-related COVID-19 responses, kindly share it with us at escap-sdd@un.org.

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Public Health: <http://www.moph.gov.kp/en/?s=covid>

Disability focal point

- The Central Committee of the Korean Federation for the Protection of the Persons with Disabilities: website unavailable

Fiji

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [28 May 2020] A review by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities has been conducted amongst members of the disability community to further understand the experiences of persons with disabilities during the pandemic.⁹²
- [4 December 2020] To build a more inclusive post COVID-19 world, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities has launched three essential items to assist persons with disabilities, including the National Directory and Information on Disability services, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities website, and Dignity kits.⁹³

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- [17 August 2020] The National Council for Persons with Disabilities has worked with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services and the National Disaster Management Office to arrange a quarantine centre suitable for treating persons with disabilities.⁹⁴

Social protection and employment support

- [27 March 2020] Tax deduction for businesses employing persons with disabilities for three consecutive years would be increased from 300 to 400 per cent.⁹⁵
- [19 May 2020] The National Council for Persons with Disabilities provides updates on its Facebook page. For example, it has been announced that 20 affected persons with disabilities would receive relief packages.⁹⁶

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health & Medical Services: <http://www.health.gov.fj/covid-19-updates>

⁹² <https://www.facebook.com/NCPDfiji/posts/111375343927074>

⁹³ <https://www.fijitimes.com/three-essential-items-launched-to-assist-persons-with-disabilities/>

⁹⁴ https://fijiwomensfund.org/fdpf_ahpsupport/

⁹⁵ <https://www.fiji.gov.fj/Media-Centre/Speeches/2020-COVID-19-BUDGET-RESPONSE-ADDRESS-BY-THE-ATTOR>

⁹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/NCPDfiji/posts/101979114866697>

Disability focal point

- National Council for Persons with Disabilities: <https://fncpd.org>

Georgia

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[11 April 2020]** A session of the interagency working group on the rights of persons with disabilities has been held to discuss measures to protect the rights under the state of emergency.⁹⁷
- **[19 April 2020]** The Emergency COVID-19 Project includes persons with disabilities as stakeholders for consultation. The project highlights the importance of accessible communication and offers direct transfers of GEL 100 to persons with severe disabilities (including children with disabilities) for up to six months.⁹⁸
- **[15 June 2020]** The Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia has held an online conference regarding the targeted programmes for persons with disabilities during the pandemic.⁹⁹

Continued access to goods and services

- **[24 April 2020]** Several organisations, including the Agency for State Care and Assistance for the Victims of Human Trafficking, UNICEF, Georgian Public Broadcaster, and MAC Georgia, have teamed up to launch a weekly show for children with disabilities and their family members. The weekly programme is intended to ensure children with disabilities have support for physical, mental, and educational needs whilst in-person services are unavailable, with topics on independent living skills, behaviour management techniques, teaching and learning methods, and parental self-care, among others.¹⁰⁰

Accessible public information

- **[17 April 2020]** The government has worked with UNDP to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to accurate and timely information to protect themselves from the pandemic.¹⁰¹

Social protection and employment support

- **[23 March 2020]** The Social Service Agency would continue state transfers, such as state pensions, compensation, and social packages.¹⁰²
- **[24 April 2020]** The government would allocate a total of GEL 3.5 billion (\$ 1.1 billion) for crisis management, of which GEL 1.035 billion would be targeted at social assistance. Around 40,000 persons with severe disabilities and children with disabilities would receive cash assistance of GEL 600.¹⁰³

⁹⁷ https://stopcov.ge/en/News/Article/In_the_Midst_of_the_Crisis_Caused_by_COVID-19%2C_a_Session_of_the_Interagency_Working_Group_Was_Held_To_Discuss_the_Needs_of_People_with_Disabilities

⁹⁸ https://www.mof.ge/images/File/Covid-19/draft_SEP_COVID-19_ENG.pdf

⁹⁹ <http://www.ombudsman.ge/eng/akhali-ambebi/onlain-konferentsia-shshm-pirta-miznobrivi-programebi-pandemiis-pirobebshi>

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.unicef.org/georgia/press-releases/tv-and-online-platforms-launched-support-families-children-disabilities-amid-covid>

¹⁰¹ <https://www.ge.undp.org/content/georgia/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2020/covid19-PwDs.html>

¹⁰² <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/regional-country/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#GE>

¹⁰³ <https://agenda.ge/en/news/2020/1273>

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19: <https://stopcov.ge/en>
- Department of Public Health: <https://dph.georgia.gov>

Disability focal point

- Social Protection Department, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs: <https://www.moh.gov.ge/en>

India

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[n.d.]** The central government has set up several empowerment groups under the Disaster Management Act to facilitate a coordinated response to the pandemic.¹⁰⁴
- **[15 May 2020]** A WhatsApp group of high-level government officials has been created for coordinating daily necessities distribution and e-pass approval for caregivers.¹⁰⁵

Continued access to goods and services

- **[n.d.]** The National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities has hosted several webinars intended to ensure the maintenance of children's well-being and education during the lockdown.¹⁰⁶ Topics of the webinars include, for instance, creation of daily schedule and learning opportunities for children with multiple disabilities¹⁰⁷ and appropriate exercise for persons with diverse disabilities.¹⁰⁸
- **[1 April 2020]** The Kerala government has issued an order to all district collectors and police chiefs to ensure the protection of persons with disabilities. Measures to be taken cover the following areas: accessible information; home delivery of essential food, water, and medicines; a dedicated helpline; special hours for persons with disabilities to use supermarkets and banks; online counselling facilities; and safety protection of caregivers, among others.¹⁰⁹
- **[4 April 2020]** All district magistrates and deputy commissioners in New Delhi have been asked to issue passes to caregivers to exempt them from the lockdown regulations and enable them to continue assisting persons with disabilities.¹¹⁰
- **[7 September 2020]** The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched an inclusive 24*7 toll-free mental rehabilitation helpline. Plans have been under development to enable video calls with sign language trained counsellors.¹¹¹

Accessible public information

- **[n.d.]** The accessible website of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities provides information on COVID-19.¹¹²

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#IN>

¹⁰⁵ https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/C.%20Report_of_Webinar.pdf

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.niepmtd.tn.nic.in/covid19.php>

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shQaL6nzxQk>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEIhT9BBZKM>

¹⁰⁹ <https://samarthyam.com/images/covid/KeralaGovtorder-Covid19.pdf>

¹¹⁰ <https://samarthyam.com/images/covid/CaregiverPassess.pdf>

¹¹¹ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/inclusive-helpline-for-persons-with-disabilities-and-others-to-focus-on-rehab/articleshow/77983933.cms>

¹¹² <https://www.niepmtd.tn.nic.in/covid19.php>

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- [7 August 2020] The Telangana High Court has directed the state government to identify and record the names of persons with disabilities at the time of COVID-19 testing. The Department for Disabled Welfare could thus access the details of COVID-19 patients among 700,000 persons with disabilities in the state.¹¹³
- [28 December 2020] The government's 'Vaccines Operational Guidelines' includes a checklist on the physical accessibility of vaccine sites, especially considering whether there is a ramp for wheelchair access.¹¹⁴
- [1 March 2021] The second phase of the vaccine roll-out has commenced, prioritizing persons with intellectual disabilities, muscular dystrophy, multiple disabilities such as deafblindness, and those with disabilities with high support needs.¹¹⁵
- [28 May 2021] Special considerations have been made to ensure that persons with disabilities and older persons are able to access vaccine services close to home.¹¹⁶

Social protection and employment support

- [n.d.] India has developed a social protection programme under the "Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Yojana". Through this, free food rations have been provided, and wages under the employment guarantee scheme have been increased. Further measures include direct cash transfers of \$13 to poor pensioners, widows, and persons with disabilities.¹¹⁷
- [27 April 2020] The Nashik Municipal Corporation in the state of Maharashtra has deposited Rs 2,000 per person to the bank accounts of over 512 persons with disabilities. The amount has been transferred by the Social Welfare Department under its scheme to provide financial assistance for persons with disabilities.¹¹⁸
- [May 2020] Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh have advanced the payment of allowances to beneficiaries, including persons with disabilities.¹¹⁹
- [1 September 2020] Many people who lost their jobs due to the lockdown have got themselves engaged in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) work. The Rural Development Department has involved over 24,582 persons with disabilities in NREGA work under the Scheme 2020-21. Tasks for persons with disabilities include plantation work, distributing water to workers, and nursery activities.¹²⁰

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website: <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/fight-against-covid-19>
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare: <https://www.mohfw.gov.in>

¹¹³ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/follow-icmr-norms-for-persons-with-disabilities-hc/articleshow/77409399.cms>

¹¹⁴

https://www.mohfw.gov.in/covid_vaccination/vaccination/dist/images/documents/COVID19VaccineOG111Chapter16.pdf

¹¹⁵ <https://www.hindustantimes.com/health/government-releases-list-of-co-morbid-conditions-for-covid-19-vaccine-priority-101614436401125.html>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/elderly-and-differently-abled-can-now-get-vaccinated-near-home-govt-issues-guidelines-149652>

¹¹⁷ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#IN>

¹¹⁸ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nashik/nmc-deposits-rs-2000-to-bank-a/c-of-512-disabled-people/articleshow/75396235.cms>

¹¹⁹ http://unprpd.org/sites/default/files/Overview%20response_1.4.pdf

¹²⁰ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/jaipur/record-engagement-of-disabled-persons-in-nrega/articleshow/77860761.cms>

- National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities:
<https://www.niepmd.tn.nic.in/covid19.php>

Disability focal point

- Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment: <http://niepmd.tn.nic.in>

Indonesia

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [22 April 2020] The Ministry of Social Affairs has published a circular letter from the Director-General of Social Rehabilitation on instructions related to the protection of persons with disabilities during the pandemic. In addition, it has circulated guidelines on psychosocial support for persons with disabilities and guidelines for social workers.¹²¹

Continued access to goods and services

- [19 June 2020] The Ministry of Social Affairs has held a COVID-19 rapid test for community social workers, including those with disabilities.¹²²

Accessible Public Information

- [18 March 2020] The government has provided sign language interpretation services for televised COVID-19 updates in response to requests from the deaf community.¹²³

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- [8 July 2020] The WHO has been working with the Ministry of Health to map and address the mental health needs of persons with disabilities.¹²⁴

Social protection and employment support

- [22 April 2020] Cash social assistance would be transferred to the accounts of persons with disabilities or delivered by mail.¹²⁵
- [25 April 2020] The Minister of Social Affairs has launched basic food assistance for 7,072 persons with disabilities. A total of 11,835 food packages have been distributed to older persons and persons with disabilities affected by COVID-19.¹²⁶ The Ministry of Social Affairs has been overseeing the distribution of social assistance to ensure that it reached target groups such as the poor and the vulnerable.¹²⁷
- [12 June 2020] The National Development Planning Agency has been working with the Ministry of Social Affairs and local governments to reregister persons with disabilities who lacked birth certificates and thus did not receive social aid.¹²⁸

¹²¹ <https://kemsos.go.id/en/the-efforts-of-risk-reduction-the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-against-persons-with-disabilities>

¹²² <https://kemsos.go.id/en/psm-as-the-frontliner-joined-covid-19-rapid-test>

¹²³ <https://www.liputan6.com/disabilitas/read/4204710/juru-bahasa-isyarat-terkait-corona-covid-19-sudah-tersedia>

¹²⁴ <https://reliefweb.int/report/indonesia/indonesia-covid-19-response-multi-sectoral-response-plan-report-no-01-08-july-2020>

¹²⁵ <https://kemsos.go.id/en/the-efforts-of-risk-reduction-the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-against-persons-with-disabilities>

¹²⁶ <https://www.kemsos.go.id/en/ensuring-that-covid-19-impact-management-reaches-vulnerable-groups>

¹²⁷ <https://kemsos.go.id/ar/kemensos-terus-kawal-distribusi-bansos-berjalan-cepat-dan-tepat>

¹²⁸ <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/06/12/people-with-disabilities-demand-access-to-information-basic-rights-during-pandemic.html>

Institutions and facilities

- [n.d.] The Directorate of Social Rehabilitation has issued guidelines for disability social welfare institutions, stressing the preference for online visits and the importance of screening visitors carefully when in person visits do occur.¹²⁹
- [4 April 2020] 6,000 food packages have been distributed to 276 social welfare institutions from the child cluster, and 700 food packages have been distributed to 22 social welfare institutions from the disability cluster throughout Jabodetabek District.¹³⁰
- [24 April 2020] The Ministry of Social Affairs has provided logistic assistance for disability social welfare institutions.¹³¹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19 (in Bahasa Indonesia): <https://covid19.go.id>

Disability focal point

- Directorate General of Social Rehabilitation, Ministry of Social Affairs: <https://kemsos.go.id>

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Government responses

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- [9 March 2020] The Head of the Prevention Committee of the State Welfare Organization has declared that the Organization would dispatch sign language interpreters to medical facilities to help deaf people affected by COVID-19.¹³²
- [27 February 2021] The Ministry of Health and Medical Education has announced that older persons and persons with disabilities would be priority groups to receive the COVID-19 vaccination in the second phase of the national roll-out.¹³³

Social protection and employment support

- [n.d.] 2,500,000 Rls. has been allocated to 40,000 persons nursing spinal cord-injured patients, beneficiaries of family-centred nursing, and persons with severe disabilities.¹³⁴
- [11 April 2020] 4,500,000 dollars has been allocated to assist households of persons with severe disabilities.¹³⁵

Institutions and facilities

- [n.d.] Sanitary and healthcare protocols have been communicated to centres covered by the State Welfare Organization, including 800 residential nursing homes for older persons and persons with disabilities, 600 boarding care centres for children with no guardians or poor parenting and nurseries, and 1,000 drug rehabilitation centres.¹³⁶

¹²⁹ <https://kemensos.go.id/uploads/topics/15852709524796.pdf>

¹³⁰ <https://kemsos.go.id/en/overcoming-the-impact-of-covid-19-mosa-distributes-6700-basic-food>

¹³¹ <https://kemsos.go.id/en/facing-the-covid-19-pandemic-the-ministry-of-social-affairs-distributes-logistic-assistance-to-lks-for-persons-with-disabilities>

¹³² <http://en.behzisti.ir/news/14615/Dispatching-sign-language-interpreters-to-hospitals>

¹³³ <https://financialtribune.com/articles/national/107645/covid-vaccination-starts-for-elderly-disabled-citizens>

¹³⁴ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#IR>

¹³⁵ <http://en.behzisti.ir/news/15817/Latest-measure-taken-by-SWO-to-prevent-Coronavirus>

¹³⁶ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#IR>

- [29 February 2020] Special measures have been announced for nurseries and rehabilitation centres, including allocating 100,000 dollars to boarding centres for older persons, chronic mental patients, and persons with physical disabilities.¹³⁷

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health and Medical Education (in Persian): <https://behdasht.gov.ir>

Disability focal point

- Department of Public Relations and International Affairs, State Welfare Organization: <http://en.behzisti.ir>

Japan

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [n.d.] The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has published a series of guidelines to address the needs of persons with disabilities during the pandemic.¹³⁸

Continued access to goods and services

- [18 March 2020] New legislation has been proposed to support persons with disabilities during the lockdown, including the treatment improvement bill for disability welfare workers which gives each employee a subsidy of 10,000 yen and the employment support bill for home-visit carers.¹³⁹
- [28 March 2020] Life support businesses have been required to operate during the state of emergency, including support services for older persons and persons with disabilities.¹⁴⁰

Accessible public information

- [n.d.] The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare operates an accessible website with a dedicated section on COVID-19 measures for persons with disabilities¹⁴¹ and a COVID-19 consultation desk for persons with hearing impairment.¹⁴²

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- [18 March 2021] Persons with severe mental illnesses or disabilities would be prioritized in the vaccine roll-out.¹⁴³

Social protection and employment support

- [5 March 2020] Temporary measures have been made for the certification of disability support classification.¹⁴⁴
- [7 April 2020] The Emergency Economic Package Against COVID-19 comprises cash handouts for every individual and affected firms.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁷ <http://en.behzisti.ir/news/14262/Latest-measures-taken-by-SWO-to-prevent-Coronavirus>

¹³⁸ <https://www.pref.miyagi.jp/soshiki/syoufuku/corona.html>

¹³⁹ <https://twitter.com/CDPPOLICY/status/1240185322656301056>

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/10900000/000624195.pdf>

¹⁴¹ https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/0000121431_00097.html

¹⁴² <https://www.jfd.or.jp/2020/02/19/pid20272>

¹⁴³ <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2021/03/18/national/science-health/covid-19-japan-vaccinations-medicine/>

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/000605029.pdf>

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19#j>

Institutions and facilities

- [15 April 2020] Disability welfare service establishments and medical care centres for children have received a priority supply of ethanol for hand disinfection.¹⁴⁶

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare:
https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/seisakunitsuite/bunya/0000164708_00001.html

Disability focal point

- Department of Health and Welfare for Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare: <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/index.html>

Kazakhstan

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [7 August 2020] Persons with disabilities and children with health conditions have been exempted from mandatory mask-wearing in public places.¹⁴⁷

Continued access to goods and services

- [18 August 2020] Special educational institutions in the North Kazakhstan region would admit children to classes by appointment, only in an individual format for children with complex disabilities.¹⁴⁸

Social protection and employment support

- [n.d.] There is now a mechanism to obtain disability status online.¹⁴⁹
- [March 2020] An anti-crisis package has been announced, including targeted assistance such as cash transfers to vulnerable households.¹⁵⁰
- [16 April 2020] The payment of disability benefits would be made during the entire period of the emergency. Also, the disability benefits have been recalculated, benefitting more than 22,800 recipients.¹⁵¹
- [11 May 2020] Additional 125 billion tenge has been allocated for COVID-19 measures, of which 30.8 billion tenge has been allocated for the provision of food and household sets to certain categories of the population. The recipients include children from 6 to 18 years old, persons with disabilities of 1-3 groups, children with disabilities, persons engaged in caring for a child with a disability, and officially registered unemployed people.¹⁵²
- [11 May 2020] Utility costs would be reimbursed for seven categories of socially vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities of groups 1-3, families raising

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/000622388.pdf>

¹⁴⁷ https://www.inform.kz/en/disabled-people-children-with-health-issues-exempt-from-wearing-face-masks_a3680920

¹⁴⁸ <https://primeminister.kz/en/news/reviews/distance-learning-to-continue-in-kazakhstan-from-september-1-duty-classes-provision-of-textbooks-and-purchase-of-computers>

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#KZ>

¹⁵⁰ <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19#K>

¹⁵¹ https://www.coronavirus2020.kz/kz/tzh-kezeninde-mugedekter-buryn-belgilengen-top-boyyynsha-zhardemaky-alady_a3639045

¹⁵² <https://primeminister.kz/en/news/press/pravitelstvom-rk-zaplanirovana-rabota-po-postepennomu-snizheniyu-nenftyanogo-deficita-a-smailov-1141040>

children with disabilities, and “invalids and participants of the Great Patriotic War, persons equated with disabled people and participants of the Great Patriotic War”.¹⁵³

- **[23 July 2020]** The Enbek State Programme for the Development of Productive Employment and Mass Entrepreneurship for 2017-2021 has been continued during the state of emergency. In the Pavlodar region, participants have been provided with state grants to develop new business ideas. The main beneficiaries include persons from large and low-income families, persons with disabilities, and young people.¹⁵⁴
- **[5 September 2020]** Food and household sets worth 1,320 million tenge in total have been distributed to 79,155 vulnerable citizens, including persons with disabilities of groups 1-3, children with disabilities under 16 years old, and people raising a child with a disability. Free protective masks worth a total of 160 million tenge have been provided for 470,615 socially vulnerable people, including persons with disabilities of groups 1-3.¹⁵⁵

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19 (in Kazakh/Russian): <https://www.coronavirus2020.kz>
- Ministry of Healthcare: <https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/dsm/activities/6625?lang=en>

Disability focal point

- Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population: <https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/enbek?lang=en>

Kiribati

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[October 2020]** Australia is providing funds for Kiribati’s COVID-19 recovery plan, with a focus on ensuring disability inclusion.¹⁵⁶

Continued access to goods and services

- **[30 September 2020]** UNICEF has submitted a proposal for funding to aid Kiribati in ensuring the inclusion of children with disabilities throughout remote learning and spread information via accessible means such as the radio, SMS and handouts.¹⁵⁷

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health and Medical Services: <https://www.mhms.gov.ki/important-notice.html>

¹⁵³ <https://primeminister.kz/en/news/press/390-mlrd-tenge-na-zhilishchnoe-stroitelstvo-kak-raspredeleny-sredstva-114436>

¹⁵⁴ <https://primeminister.kz/en/news/reviews/personnel-training-teaching-basics-of-entrepreneurship-expanding-microcrediting-in-rural-areas-how-enbek-state-program-implemented-in-kazakhstan>

¹⁵⁵ <https://primeminister.kz/en/news/reviews/construction-support-for-smes-and-nvestment-how-east-kazakhstan-region-developed-during-the-pandemic>

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/development/kiribati-covid-19-development-response-plan>

¹⁵⁷ <https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/document/file/2020-11-application-program-document-covid-19-accelerated-funding-for-kiribati.pdf>

Disability focal point

- Disability Inclusive Division, Ministry of Women, Youth, Sport & Social Affairs:
<https://www.mwysa.gov.ki>

Kyrgyzstan

Government responses

Continued access to goods and services

- **[March 2020]** UNICEF has received a grant of \$70,000 dollars from the Global Partnership for Education to assist the Ministry of Education in creating online learning platforms and content in local languages for all children, including children with disabilities.¹⁵⁸

Medical and quarantine policies and procedures

- **[3 February 2021]** The first phase of vaccination would target staff in long-term care facilities and the second phases would prioritize socially vulnerable groups, persons aged 60 and above, and persons with chronic diseases and clinical risk factors.¹⁵⁹

Social protection and employment support

- **[n.d.]** The government has prepared a package of COVID-19 economic measures, including a food security programme for vulnerable groups.¹⁶⁰
- **[n.d.]** Approximately 490,000 citizens from socially vulnerable groups would receive social payments from the government.¹⁶¹
- **[20 April 2020]** The Ministry of Labor and Social Development has extended the period of disability pension payment due to the state of emergency. Also, the validity of disability-related certificates has been prolonged.¹⁶²

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health and Social Development: <http://med.kg/en/rekomendatsii-dlya-naseleniya-2.html>

Disability focal point

- Unit for Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (in Russian):
<https://mlsp.gov.kg>

Lao People's Democratic Republic (the)

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[12 June 2020]** The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare would strengthen coordination with other ASEAN countries in helping vulnerable groups, including children, older

¹⁵⁸ <https://www.globalpartnership.org/where-we-work/kyrgyz-republic>

¹⁵⁹ <http://med.kg/en/news/3887-covid-19-vaccination.html>

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19#K>

¹⁶¹ <https://home.kpmg/xx/en/home/insights/2020/04/kyrgyzstan-government-and-institution-measures-in-response-to-covid.html>

¹⁶² https://24.kg/english/150625_Period_of_some_social_payments_extended_due_to_state_of_emergency

persons, and persons with disabilities. Ministers of ASEAN countries would continue updating the COVID-19 situation and the impacts on vulnerable groups.¹⁶³

Continued access to goods and services

- **[2 July 2020]** The government has been working with UNICEF to provide support and protection for social workers, to continue their work and services for vulnerable children during the pandemic.¹⁶⁴

Accessible public information

- **[26 June 2020]** UNDP has collaborated with the Center of Communication and Education for Health (within the Ministry of Health), WHO and Lao Telecom to create a telephone information service regarding COVID-19 for persons with visual impairment.¹⁶⁵

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19 (in Lao): <https://www.covid19.gov.la/index.php>

Disability focal point

- Division of Disability and Elderly, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (in Lao): <http://www.molsw.gov.la>

Malaysia

Government responses

Continued access to goods and services

- **[11 July 2020]** 3,333 volunteers of the Home Help Services Programme of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development would receive special assistance of RM 300 each. The one-off aid is part of the initiative under the National Economy Recovery Plan (Penjana). The Programme is a social support service for older persons and persons with disabilities, especially for those living alone or with family members who could not take care of them.¹⁶⁶

Accessible Public Information

- **[17 April 2020]** Government communications on COVID-19 have been updated to include Malaysian sign language interpretation in response to the National Council of the Blind Malaysia's advocacy.¹⁶⁷

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[24 March 2020]** The Ministry of Health has issued guidelines on mental health and psychosocial support amid COVID-19. The guidelines include instructions for healthcare workers to use understandable ways of sharing messages with persons with intellectual, cognitive, and psychosocial disabilities.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³ http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/freeContent/FreeContenten_Laos_Asean_112.php

¹⁶⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/laos/press-releases/unicef-provides-critical-supplies-social-welfare-workforce-across-12-provinces>

¹⁶⁵ https://www.la.undp.org/content/lao_pdr/en/home/blog/2020/one-call-away--innovation-to-inform-people-with-disabilities-on-.html

¹⁶⁶ <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2020/07/11/home-help-service-volunteers-to-get-one-off-aid-of-rm300-says-minister-rina/1883526>

¹⁶⁷ <https://www.ifes.org/news/advocacy-success-disability-inclusive-responses-covid-19-southeast-asia>

¹⁶⁸

https://www.moh.gov.my/moh/resources/Penerbitan/Garis%20Panduan/COVID19/Annex_33_Mental_health_and_Psychosocial_support_23032020.pdf

- **[3 July 2020]** Persons with disabilities have been exempted from paying the COVID-19 detection test fees.¹⁶⁹
- **[20 August 2020]** The Ministry of Health has released a new list of Malaysian returnees exempted from paying for the COVID-19 quarantine, including those with disability cards issued under the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008.¹⁷⁰
- **[24 February 2021]** It has been announced that persons with disabilities would be prioritized in the second phase of the vaccine roll-out, commencing in April 2021.¹⁷¹

Social protection and employment support

- **[2 April 2020]** The government has allocated a total of RM25 million in the form of food, healthcare items, and shelters to vulnerable groups, such as older persons and children in shelters, persons with disabilities, and homeless people.¹⁷²
- **[11 June 2020]** The Melaka Social Security Organization (SOCISO) has disbursed over RM10 million to social benefits, including Temporary Disability, Permanent Disability, and Dependent Benefits.¹⁷³
- **[12 June 2020]** The Department of Social Welfare (JKM) would transfer one-off RM 300 financial aid to 300,000 persons with disabilities and single mothers.¹⁷⁴
- **[12 June 2020]** The RM1.5 billion employee recruitment incentive programme would encourage employers to hire workers among persons with disabilities, especially during the pandemic.¹⁷⁵

Institutions and facilities

- **[30 May 2020]** All long-term care facilities, including care homes for persons with disabilities, have undergone regular testing for COVID-19.¹⁷⁶

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health (in Malay): <http://covid-19.moh.gov.my>
- Prime Minister's Office: <https://www.pmo.gov.my/special-contents/2019-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

Disability focal point

- Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development: <https://www.kpwkm.gov.my/kpwkm/index.php?r=portal/index>

Maldives

¹⁶⁹ <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2020/07/03/malaysian-government-sets-covid-19-test-fees/1881185>

¹⁷⁰ <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2020/08/20/health-ministry-releases-new-list-of-malaysians-exempted-from-paying-for-co/1895548>

¹⁷¹ <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/malaysian-premier-receives-covid-19-vaccine/2155490>

¹⁷² <https://www.bharian.com.my/rencana/komentar/2020/04/672084/pelaksanaan-pakej-prihatin-perlu-mesra-oku>

¹⁷³ <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2020/06/11/melaka-socso-has-disbursed-rm10m-in-benefits-as-of-may/1874666>

¹⁷⁴ <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2020/06/12/penjana-grant-for-nursery-operators-will-ensure-sop-compliance-says-group/1874961>

¹⁷⁵ <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2020/06/12/penjana-grant-for-nursery-operators-will-ensure-sop-compliance-says-group/1874961>

¹⁷⁶ <https://lccovid.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Malaysia-LTC-COVID-situation-report-30-May.pdf>

Government responses

Continued access to goods and services

- **[n.d.]** The Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services has announced that it would continue services during the government shutdown and has been monitoring the situations of older persons, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable individuals.¹⁷⁷

Accessible public information

- **[31 October 2020]** The National Emergency Operations Centre has had volunteers provide sign language interpretation services at all briefings on COVID-19.¹⁷⁸

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[30 March 2020]** The COVID-19 Quick Reference Guidelines put forward basic requirements for a quarantine facility or home quarantine. There is a mechanism for addressing the needs of persons with disabilities.¹⁷⁹
- **[22 May 2020]** The Ministry of Health has laid out guidelines on healthcare facility operation amid COVID-19, which included training health workers on how best to support persons with disabilities at healthcare centres.¹⁸⁰
- **[16 February 2021]** Mobile vaccination efforts have commenced to reach persons with disabilities who could not attend vaccination centres.¹⁸¹

Social protection and employment support

- **[9 July 2020]** The Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services has requested personal sanitation and essential items for persons with disabilities from the WHO.¹⁸²

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health: <https://covid19.health.gov.mv/en>

Disability focal point

- Disability Office, Ministry of Gender, Family and Human Rights: <https://gender.gov.mv/en>

Marshall Islands (the)

Government responses

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[26 October 2020]** As part of its vaccination plan, the Ministry of Health and Human Services has identified persons with disabilities as a “critical population” who should be prioritized in the first phase of the vaccine roll-out.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#MV>

¹⁷⁸ <https://maldives.un.org/index.php/en/102379-impact-covid-19-persons-disability-maldives>

¹⁷⁹ <https://covid19.health.gov.mv/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-QR-SOPs-v9.pdf>

¹⁸⁰ <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/341101590166551818/environmental-and-social-management-framework-esmf-maldives-covid-19-emergency-response-and-health-systems-preparedness-project-p173801>

¹⁸¹ <https://raaje.mv/95454>

¹⁸² https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/maldives/maldives-sitrep-9-july2020.pdf?sfvrsn=6e6e278e_2

¹⁸³ <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/marshall-islands-jurisdiction-executive-summary.pdf>

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- National Disaster Management Office: <https://ndmo.gov.mh/rmi-covid19-information>

Disability focal point

- Ministry of Culture and Internal Affairs: website unavailable

Micronesia (Federated States of)

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[8 April 2020]** The government has prepared a COVID-19 Response Framework worth US\$20 million to develop quarantine facilities, provide infection control training, and increase ventilators and testing capacity.¹⁸⁴ The goals of the framework include the protection of high-risk people, such as persons with disabilities.¹⁸⁵
- **[4 August 2020]** The Department of Health and Social Affairs has issued COVID-19 guidelines with considerations for persons with disabilities.¹⁸⁶

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[25 July 2020]** The Quarantine Site team of the State of Kosrae has installed a ramp in front of the briefing area, facilitating the movement of repatriating residents with physical disabilities.¹⁸⁷

Social protection and employment support

- **[December 2020]** One-off payments of \$500 have been prepared for eligible low-income households, with additional benefits for households of persons with disabilities.¹⁸⁸
- **[18 February 2021]** The Department of Finance & Administration has started preparing a new social protection programme for the vulnerable, as a response to COVID-19, which would include targeted assistance to persons with disabilities such as temporary waivers of certain medical expenses and electricity subsidies.¹⁸⁹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website: <https://www.fsmgov.org/index.html>

Disability focal point

- Department of Health and Social Affairs: <https://hsa.gov.fm>

¹⁸⁴ <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Policy-Responses-to-COVID-19#M>

¹⁸⁵ <https://gov.fm/index.php/component/content/article/35-pio-articles/news-and-updates/296-the-fsm-covid-19-response-framework-a-summary?Itemid=177>

¹⁸⁶ <https://www.fsmgov.org/fsmun/pubheal20.pdf>

¹⁸⁷ <https://gov.fm/index.php/component/content/article/35-pio-articles/news-and-updates/339-fsm-ksa-covid-19-task-forces-complete-additional-simulation-exercises-contact-tracing-community-workshops-i-think-you-can-open-soon-and-it-will-be-your-decision-when-secretary-taulung-says?Itemid=177>

¹⁸⁸ <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/662406/pem-december-2020.pdf>

¹⁸⁹ <https://gov.fm/index.php/component/content/article/35-pio-articles/news-and-updates/428-social-protection-programming-for-the-elderly-persons-with-disabilities-and-low-income-households-entering-pilot-stage-program-to-be-expanded-in-march-april>

Mongolia

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [9 May 2020] Mongolia has conducted a COVID-19 outbreak drill to practice social distancing, street sanitization and distribution of food rations to older persons and persons with disabilities.¹⁹⁰

Continued access to goods and services

- [23 December 2020] The Cabinet has announced the importance of improving inclusive digital education and has made it compulsory for all teaching majors to complete a course on working with children with disabilities.¹⁹¹

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- [4 March 2021] The Ministry of Health has noted that the next groups to be prioritized in the vaccine roll-out would include persons with disabilities.¹⁹²

Social protection and employment support

- [6 May 2020] Social welfare pensions and allowances have been increased from MNT 188,000 to 288,000 MNT, reaching a total of 62,600 people that include persons with disabilities.¹⁹³
- [6 August 2020] The monthly allowance of MNT 100,000 for children with disabilities who need permanent care would be granted until the end of the year.¹⁹⁴
- [3 December 2020] The UNFPA has collaborated with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection to distribute 400 dignity kits to persons with disabilities.¹⁹⁵

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19 (in Mongolian): <https://covid19.mohs.mn>

Disability focal point

- General Agency for the Development of Persons with Disabilities:
<http://www.gadpwd.gov.mn>

Myanmar

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [29 April 2020] The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has implemented a plan considering the needs of persons with disabilities in its COVID-19 response.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁰ <https://thediplomat.com/2020/05/practice-makes-perfect-mongolias-covid-19-outbreak-drill/>

¹⁹¹ <https://montsame.mn/en/read/247887>

¹⁹² <https://www.montsame.mn/en/read/255652>

¹⁹³ <https://www.zasag.mn/news/view/24959>

¹⁹⁴ <https://montsame.mn/en/read/232972>

¹⁹⁵ <https://www.montsame.mn/en/read/245575>

¹⁹⁶ <https://www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com/people-with-disabilities-must-not-be-left-in-response-to-covid-19-crisis/>

Accessible public information

- [29 April 2020] The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has made information accessible through graphics and sign language interpretation.¹⁹⁷

Social protection and employment support

- [27 April 2020] The Overcoming as One: COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan includes provisions for in-kind food transfers to vulnerable households and at-risk populations, as well as cash transfers to the most vulnerable and affected families.¹⁹⁸
- [14 September 2020] The Rehabilitation Department of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has distributed cash assistance of K30,000 each to 200,000 persons with disabilities, including those from poor households, quarantined at home or in facilities, and infected by the pandemic.¹⁹⁹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health and Sports:
<https://mohs.gov.mm/Main/content/publication/2019-ncov>

Disability focal point

- Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement:
<https://moswrr.gov.mm/index.php>

Nauru

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [October 2020] The Nauru COVID-19 Development Response Plan highlights that support for the most vulnerable, such as persons with disabilities, is most effective when mainstreamed across COVID-19 responses.²⁰⁰

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website:
<http://www.naurugov.nr/government/departments/department-of-health-and-medicinal-service/covid-19.aspx>

Disability focal point

- Department of Education:
<http://www.naurugov.nr/government/departments/department-of-education.aspx>

Nepal

¹⁹⁷ <https://www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com/people-with-disabilities-must-not-be-left-in-response-to-covid-19-crisis/>

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.mopfi.gov.mm/my/blog/45/11310>

¹⁹⁹ <https://www.gnlm.com.mm/moswrr-discusses-providing-cash-assistance-for-persons-with-disabilities/#article-title>

²⁰⁰ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/covid-response-plan-nauru.docx>

Government responses

Continued access to goods and services

- [n.d.] During the lockdown, local governments would further manage food and other necessities for pregnant women, persons with disabilities, older persons living in elderly homes, and children living in children's homes.²⁰¹

Accessible Public Information

- [17 April 2020] Sign language interpretation services have been provided in daily government briefings on COVID-19.²⁰²

Social protection and employment support

- [30 March 2020] Provincial and municipal governments have distributed food aid with special priority given to expecting mothers, orphans, persons with disabilities, and persons with chronic illnesses.²⁰³

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health and Population: <https://covid19.mohp.gov.np>
- Health Emergency Operation Center: <https://heoc.mohp.gov.np>

Disability focal point

- Disability Rights Promotion Section, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare: <https://mowcsc.gov.np>

New Zealand

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [15 April 2020] The New Zealand Government has published the COVID-19 Health and Disability System Response Plan in response to the outbreak of the virus.²⁰⁴
- [June 2020] The June edition of the Disability Support Services Newsletter focuses on engaging disability communities during COVID-19 and getting back to business as usual.²⁰⁵
- [30 August 2020] Persons with disabilities have been legally exempted from having to wear face masks on public transport, if their disabilities make face covering unsuitable.²⁰⁶
- [1 September 2020] The Office for Disability Issues has run a weekly survey²⁰⁷ to better understand issues and risks experienced by persons with disabilities amid the COVID-19 outbreak.²⁰⁸

²⁰¹ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#NP>

²⁰² <https://pradeshportal.com/english/news/8285>

²⁰³ <https://www.nepalitimes.com/latest/nepal-covid-19-relief-package/>

²⁰⁴ <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/covid-19-health-and-disability-system-response-plan>

²⁰⁵ <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/disability-services/disability-publications/disability-support-services-newsletter>

²⁰⁶ <https://www.odi.govt.nz/whats-happening/advice-on-masks-and-face-coverings-during-covid-19/>

²⁰⁷ <https://www.odi.govt.nz/whats-happening/survey-how-life-is-going-for-the-disability-community/>

²⁰⁸ <https://www.odi.govt.nz/whats-happening/message-from-minister-sepuloni/>

Continued access to goods and services

- **[n.d.]** Essential community health services and disabilities care services have been available under all health alert levels.²⁰⁹
- **[n.d.]** Pharmacies would remain open and arrange home deliveries of medicines to some people under alert level 3.²¹⁰
- **[n.d.]** Key health and disability workers have been exempted from the New Zealand border closure.²¹¹
- **[n.d.]** The Ministry of Education provides accessible learning resources on the Learning from Home website to ensure those with disabilities can continue their education during a lockdown.²¹² Students with disabilities have been given the option of continuing to learn from home post COVID-19 lockdown if they felt this option was safest.²¹³
- **[15 April 2020]** A \$27 million package has been given to community groups to enhance essential services, support persons with disabilities in lockdown, and strengthen local resilience.²¹⁴

Accessible public information

- **[n.d.]** Information for persons with disabilities is available on the website of the Ministry of Health in accessible formats.²¹⁵
- **[16 March 2020]** Videos summarizing key COVID-19 information are available in New Zealand Sign Language.²¹⁶
- **[16 May 2020]** The deaf community can use the NZ Relay Service and the Video Interpreting Service to contact the COVID-19 Healthline.²¹⁷

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[June 2020]** The National COVID-19 Testing Strategy mentions alternative places of testing beyond fixed primary health care facilities for persons with disabilities, such as community hubs.²¹⁸
- **[30 March 2021]** Persons with disabilities would be prioritized in Group 2 and 3 of the vaccine roll-out.²¹⁹

Social protection and employment support

- **[15 April 2020]** Core benefit payments have been increased by \$25 (gross) per week for the most vulnerable.²²⁰

²⁰⁹ <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-current-situation/health-and-disability-services-alert-level-3>

²¹⁰ <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-current-situation/health-and-disability-services-alert-level-3>

²¹¹ <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-response-planning/covid-19-essential-services-health-and-disability-system>

²¹² https://learningfromhome.govt.nz/resources?age=Inclusive_Education

²¹³ <https://covid19.hrc.co.nz/your-rights#Disability>

²¹⁴ <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/glance/covid-19-economic-package-glance-he-waka-eke-noa-we-are-all-working-together-april-2020>

²¹⁵ <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-information-disabled-people-and-their-family-and-whanau>

²¹⁶ <https://www.odi.govt.nz/whats-happening/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-new-zealand-sign-language/>

²¹⁷ <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-information-disabled-people-and-their-family-and-whanau/covid-19-information-and-advice-deaf-community>

²¹⁸ https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/mid-term_national_testing_strategy_covid-19_june_2020.pdf

²¹⁹ <https://covid19.govt.nz/health-and-wellbeing/covid-19-vaccines/getting-a-covid-19-vaccine/how-our-vaccine-rollout-will-work/>

²²⁰ <https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/glance/covid-19-economic-package-glance-he-waka-eke-noa-we-are-all-working-together-april-2020>

Institutions and facilities

- [n.d.] Disability residential care services would follow COVID-19 risk screening and infection prevention control, physical distancing measures, and PPE guidance. Persons' details would be recorded to enable contact tracing.²²¹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19: <https://covid19.govt.nz>
- Ministry of Health: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

Disability focal point

- Office for Disability Issues, Ministry of Social Development: <https://www.odi.govt.nz>

Pakistan

Government responses

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- [12 May 2020] To support patients with mental illness, disabilities, and other chronic conditions, the Health Minister has announced that all COVID-19 patients should be fully assessed based on their needs.²²²

Social protection and employment support

- [20 April 2020] The Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme, worth PKR 144 billion, has been developed to benefit 12 million vulnerable families affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Ehsaas is a first-of-its-kind poverty-reduction programme for poor women, widows, orphans, homeless people, persons with disabilities, poor farmers, poor labourers, and others from low-income backgrounds.²²³
- [20 April 2020] Other government support programmes for persons with disabilities include the Ehsas Roshan Programme (food rations) and the Sehat Sahulat Programme (medical care).²²⁴
- [30 July 2020] UNFPA has partnered with provincial government departments and commissions to distribute dignity kits to women and girls with disabilities in four provinces to help maintain personal hygiene during COVID-19.²²⁵

Institutions and facilities

- [2 June 2020] The Guidelines on the Care of Old Patients in Wake of COVID-19 stipulate that older persons in care facilities, particularly those with pre-existing medical

²²¹ <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/health-and-disability-services-different-alert-levels/health-and-disability-services-alert-level-2>

²²² <https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2020/05/12/patients-in-pakistan-are-actively-participating-in-relief-activities-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

²²³ <https://www.zameen.com/blog/ehsaas-kafaalat-programme-pakistan.html>

²²⁴ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/magazine/us/641844-digital-baithak-covid-19-and-persons-with-disabilities>

²²⁵ https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/pakistan_situation_report_-_20200730.pdf

conditions or disabilities, should take strong infection prevention and control measures. Local authorities should be notified immediately about any suspected cases.²²⁶

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19: <http://covid.gov.pk>

Disability focal point

- Ministry of Human Rights: <http://www.mohr.gov.pk/index>

Palau

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability-inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [26 April 2021] The government has partnered with the ADB to develop a COVID-19 project for older persons, persons with disabilities, victims of gender-based violence, and other vulnerable groups, addressing their immediate COVID-19-related needs.²²⁷

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website: <https://www.palau.gov.pw/covid-19-advisory>

Disability focal point

- Ministry of Health: <http://www.palauhealth.org>

Papua New Guinea

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [21 May 2020] The COVID-19 Multi-Sector Response Plan by the Disaster Management Team addresses the needs to protect persons with disabilities, among other vulnerable groups, from abuse and psychological distress. The plan also mentions securing access to services and emergency messages for persons with disabilities.²²⁸
- [7 September 2020] Persons with disabilities have been exempted from compulsory mask wearing.²²⁹

²²⁶

http://covid.gov.pk/new_guidelines/07June2020_20200602_Guidelines_for_Care_of_Old_Patients_in_Wake_of_COVID_19_3501.pdf

²²⁷

https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session38/PW/A_HRC_WG.6_38_PLW_1_AV_Palau_E.doc

X

²²⁸ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/200521%20DMT%20COVID-19%20HRP.pdf>

²²⁹ <https://www.who.int/papuanewguinea/internal-publications-detail/covid-19-in-papua-new-guinea-situation-report-37>

- **[9 October 2020]** The Ministry of Education has launched their COVID-19 Education Emergency Response and Recovery Plan, which highlights accessible learning for all.²³⁰

Accessible public information

- **[30 March 2020]** A member of the parliament has conducted a COVID-19 awareness session for persons with disabilities.²³¹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19: <https://covid19.info.gov.pg>
- Ministry of Health: <https://www.health.gov.pg/subindex.php?news=1>

Disability focal point

- Department for Community Development and Religion: <http://www.dfcd.gov.pg>

Philippines (the)

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[25 May 2020]** Guidelines on mall operations have been issued, including limiting lift access to older persons, persons with disabilities and pregnant women, with one companion allowed.²³²
- **[9 July 2020]** As part of the celebration of the 42nd National Disability Prevention Week, the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office in Antique has searched for persons with disabilities who had shown heroic acts during the pandemic.²³³

Continued access to goods and services

- **[25 March 2020]** The town of Paranas has launched an errand service to help older persons and persons with disabilities get essential items from the nearest city amid travel restrictions.²³⁴
- **[31 March 2020]** The Department of the Interior and Local Government has issued the Guidelines on Providing Proper Welfare of Persons with Disabilities during the Enhanced Community Quarantine due to the Corona Virus 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic. The Guidelines focus on the distribution of food and essential items to persons with disabilities by Barangay Captains.²³⁵
- **[9 April 2020]** The local government in Iloilo City has ordered that the first hour of operations of all establishments should be dedicated to vulnerable groups, including older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, and other vulnerable sectors.²³⁶
- **[17 April 2020]** The Department of the Interior and Local Government has required local government units to ensure that persons with disabilities could use barangay vehicles in emergency situations.²³⁷

²³⁰ <https://www.unicef.org/png/press-releases/papua-new-guinea-launches-its-covid-19-education-emergencies-response-and-recovery>

²³¹ <https://www.thenational.com.pg/mp-pays-power-water-bills-for-people-living-with-disability/>

²³² <https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1042791>

²³³ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1108422>

²³⁴ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1097719>

²³⁵ <https://www.ncda.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/DILG-MC-066-s-2020-Guidelines-on-the-Providing-Proper-Welfare-of-PWDs-during-ECQ.pdf>

²³⁶ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1099332>

²³⁷ <https://dilg.gov.ph/news/DILG-to-LGUs-Prioritize-PWDs-in-distribution-of-relief-goods/NC-2020-1097>

- **[6 August 2020]** Amid preparations for the opening of classes, the Department of Education has been urged to ensure that learners with disabilities would have access to therapies and other health care and rehabilitation services.²³⁸

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[January 2021]** Persons with disabilities would be prioritized as part of the Priority Eligible Group B in the vaccine roll-out.²³⁹

Accessible public information

- **[3 April 2020]** The National Council on Disability Affairs has issued an accessible copy of the Guidelines on Providing Proper Welfare of Persons with Disabilities during the Enhanced Community Quarantine due to the Corona Virus 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic.²⁴⁰

Social protection and employment support

- **[26 March 2020]** The local government in Dumaguete City would provide a rice subsidy for 30,000 indigent families and individuals, including persons with disabilities and older persons.²⁴¹
- **[31 March 2020]** Valenzuela City has launched the City Care Bag for registered children with severe disabilities and impairment. This is in addition to the City Food Voucher and the Valenzuela City Market on Wheels Programme.²⁴²
- **[1 April 2020]** The Department of Social Welfare and Development has provided initial assistance of 4,764 food packs for residents in the cities of San Jose del Monte, Meycauayan and Malolos, as well as in the towns of Pandi and San Miguel during the quarantine period. This assistance has been received by older persons and persons with disabilities.²⁴³
- **[3 April 2020]** The government has announced a PHP200 billion cash subsidy for affected workers in the informal sector and vulnerable citizens such as persons with disabilities.²⁴⁴
- **[13 April 2020]** The City Social Welfare and Development Office has initially released PHP 2.19 million to 438 beneficiaries of the national Social Amelioration Programme (SAP) in Zamboanga City. The beneficiaries include older persons, solo parents, persons with disabilities, distressed overseas Filipino workers, indigent indigenous peoples, underprivileged sectors, and homeless citizens.²⁴⁵
- **[17 April 2020]** The Department of the Interior and Local Government has emphasized that persons with disabilities should be prioritized in the distribution of relief goods.²⁴⁶
- **[6 May 2020]** More than PHP 50 billion has been distributed to 9.5 million families covered by SAP.²⁴⁷
- **[30 June 2020]** The Department of Social Welfare and Development has provided increased support on assistive devices. Persons with disabilities might request this support through the Persons with Disability Welfare Programme and Assistance for Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) at the Crisis Intervention Unit field offices.²⁴⁸

²³⁸ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1111368>

²³⁹ <https://doh.gov.ph/node/27220>

²⁴⁰ <https://www.ncda.gov.ph/2020/04/accessible-copy-of-guidelines-on-providing-proper-welfare-of-persons-with-disabilities-during-the-enhanced-community-quarantine-due-to-the-corona-virus-2019-covid-19-pandemic/>

²⁴¹ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1097918>

²⁴² <https://www.valenzuela.gov.ph/article/news/13386>

²⁴³ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1098474>

²⁴⁴ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1098794>

²⁴⁵ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1099609>

²⁴⁶ <https://dilg.gov.ph/news/DILG-to-LGUs-Prioritize-PWDs-in-distribution-of-relief-goods/NC-2020-1097>

²⁴⁷ <https://www.dswd.gov.ph/dswd-supports-dilgs-move-to-extend-aid-distribution/>

²⁴⁸ <https://www.dswd.gov.ph/dswd-provides-assistive-devices-to-persons-with-disability/>

- **[15 July 2020]** The Department of Labor and Employment has created a survey to assess the impact of the pandemic on persons with disabilities, with the intention of ensuring disability-inclusive recovery in employment and livelihood.²⁴⁹
- **[18 July 2020]** The Department of Agrarian Reform would select 15 female agrarian reform beneficiaries from six provinces to support their livelihood in crisis by providing a livelihood package based on their preferences and capabilities. Women with disabilities undertaking farming activities are one of the primary target groups.²⁵⁰
- **[27 July 2020]** The provincial government of Pangasinan has launched a livelihood aid programme, with cash assistance of PHP 400 each particularly targeting persons with disabilities.²⁵¹
- **[19 August 2020]** Around PHP 77.9 billion cash assistance has been distributed to 13,000,080 family beneficiaries under the second tranche of SAP. The beneficiaries include frail older persons and persons with disabilities.²⁵²
- **[28 August 2020]** The San Juan City government has released cash assistance under SAP to residents in an indoor stadium, with a special lane for persons with disabilities, pregnant women, and older persons to claim their financial aid.²⁵³

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website: <https://covid19.gov.ph>
- Department of Health: <https://doh.gov.ph/2019-nCoV>

Disability focal point

- National Council on Disability Affairs: <https://www.ncda.gov.ph>

Republic of Korea (the)

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[19 April 2020]** The 21st Disability Policy Coordination Committee has finalized the 2020 Disability Policy Implementation Plan. The government has been making active efforts to ensure that persons with disabilities would not be marginalized in response to COVID-19.²⁵⁴

Continued access to goods and services

- **[16 March 2020]** In Seoul, visiting care services would be offered to older persons and persons with disabilities whose care services have been suspended due to the spread of COVID-19.²⁵⁵

²⁴⁹ <https://www.dole.gov.ph/news/moving-towards-disability-inclusive-recovery-in-employment-and-livelihood-in-the-time-of-covid-19/>

²⁵⁰ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1109353>

²⁵¹ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1110210>

²⁵² <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1112805>

²⁵³ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1113738>

²⁵⁴

http://www.mohw.go.kr/react/al/sal0301vw.jsp?PAR_MENU_ID=04&MENU_ID=0403&CONT_SEQ=354107

²⁵⁵ <http://mediahub.seoul.go.kr/archives/1273495>

- **[9 April 2020]** The Ministry of Education and local governments have been required to ensure that students with disabilities would not be marginalized during online schooling.²⁵⁶
- **[22 April 2020]** The Ministry of Health and Welfare and the Daegu Preview Service Center have been providing emergency care services for children, older persons, and persons with disabilities so that the care services would not be interrupted due to the pandemic.²⁵⁷
- **[22 April 2020]** The Daegu City Social Service Center has established an emergency care delivery system. It has recruited 180 people to provide 24-hour care for children, older persons and persons with disabilities living alone due to family infection or self-isolation.²⁵⁸
- **[13 October 2020]** Persons with disabilities have been permitted to delegate their family members to buy masks.²⁵⁹
- **[13 October 2020]** A special online education platform has been established to provide customized online classes for students with disabilities, in addition to support measures such as home-visit classes, learning packets, and special educational tools and materials.²⁶⁰

Accessible public information

- **[1 September 2020]** The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has held press briefings with a sign-language interpreter. Three major TV networks (KBS, MBC and SBS) have started or would start sign language interpretation services on their main news programmes.²⁶¹

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[16 March 2020]** Seoul has been providing emergency support for older persons and persons with disabilities in cases where they need self-isolation, but there is no care provider. Older persons and persons with disabilities could enter a quarantine facility designated by the Seoul Metropolitan Government to receive care services.²⁶²
- **[12 March 2021]** Teachers in special schools for children with disabilities would be prioritized for the vaccination.²⁶³

²⁵⁶

http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/tcmBoardView.do?brdId=&brdGubun=&dataGubun=&ncvContSeq=353996&contSeq=353996&board_id=140&gubun=BDJ

²⁵⁷

http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/tcmBoardView.do?brdId=&brdGubun=&dataGubun=&ncvContSeq=354159&contSeq=354159&board_id=140&gubun=BDJ

²⁵⁸

http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/tcmBoardView.do?brdId=&brdGubun=&dataGubun=&ncvContSeq=354159&contSeq=354159&board_id=140&gubun=BDJ

²⁵⁹

http://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/brd/m_22591/view.do?seq=35&srchFr=&srchTo=&srchWord=&srchTp=&multi_itm_seq=0&itm_seq_1=0&itm_seq_2=0&company_cd=&company_nm=&page=1&titleNm=

²⁶⁰

http://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/brd/m_22591/view.do?seq=35&srchFr=&srchTo=&srchWord=&srchTp=&multi_itm_seq=0&itm_seq_1=0&itm_seq_2=0&company_cd=&company_nm=&page=1&titleNm=

²⁶¹ <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20200901005400315?section=search>

²⁶² <http://mediahub.seoul.go.kr/archives/1273495>

²⁶³ <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20210312005000315>

Social protection and employment support

- [31 March 2020] The Ministry of Health and Welfare has provided consumption coupons for 2.3 million low-income households, including families receiving a disability pension.²⁶⁴
- [4 May 2020] Around 21.71 million households would receive emergency disaster relief payments through a universal programme worth 14.3 trillion won (\$11.66 billion). Around 2.8 million vulnerable families, such as beneficiaries of national basic livelihood security and disability pensions, would receive the funds first.²⁶⁵

Institutions and facilities

- [22 April 2020] The Daegu City Social Service Center has put human resources into social welfare facilities that have been in danger of stopping services due to the infection of workers.²⁶⁶
- [26 April 2020] Disinfection procedures have been strengthened in social welfare facilities.²⁶⁷
- [26 April 2020] To reduce the risk of COVID-19 for older persons and persons with disabilities, social welfare facilities have implemented measures recommended by the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasure Headquarters.²⁶⁸
- [21 March 2021] Those working or living in facilities for older persons and persons with disabilities would be prioritized in early phases of the vaccine roll-out.²⁶⁹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19: <http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/en>

Disability focal point

- Bureau of Policy for Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Health and Welfare: <https://www.mohw.go.kr/eng>

Russian Federation (the)

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [10 July 2020] At a session of the Supervisory Board of the Strategic Initiatives Agency, the President stressed the need to generalize regions' experience in combatting the

²⁶⁴

http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/tcmBoardView.do?brdId=&brdGubun=&dataGubun=&ncvContSeq=353818&contSeq=353818&board_id=140&gubun=BDJ

²⁶⁵ http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20200504000558&ACE_SEARCH=1

²⁶⁶

http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/tcmBoardView.do?brdId=&brdGubun=&dataGubun=&ncvContSeq=354159&contSeq=354159&board_id=140&gubun=BDJ

²⁶⁷

http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/tcmBoardView.do?brdId=&brdGubun=&dataGubun=&ncvContSeq=354219&contSeq=354219&board_id=140&gubun=BDJ

²⁶⁸

http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/tcmBoardView.do?brdId=&brdGubun=&dataGubun=&ncvContSeq=354219&contSeq=354219&board_id=140&gubun=BDJ

²⁶⁹ https://world.kbs.co.kr/service/news_view.htm?lang=e&Seq_Code=160287

pandemic. It has been highlighted to study closely real-life situations and problems faced by families with children, older persons, and persons with disabilities.²⁷⁰

Continued access to goods and services

- **[27 May 2020]** The Moscow Scientific and Practical Center for Child Psychoneurology of the Moscow City Health Department has organized remote rehabilitation services for children with disabilities.²⁷¹
- **[28 May 2020]** A monthly payment of 12,000 roubles would be given to home carers for persons with disabilities, older persons, orphans, and children deprived of parental care who are not at social facilities.²⁷²

Accessible public information

- **[n.d.]** The official portal on COVID-19 has a dedicated webpage on measures for persons with disabilities.²⁷³

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[18 May 2020]** Infected healthcare workers who work directly with COVID-19 patients would receive a lump sum insurance payment of 68, 811 roubles if the infection causes disabilities.²⁷⁴

Social protection and employment support

- **[n.d.]** The disability status would be automatically extended for six months for citizens whose next re-examination was from 1 March to 1 October 2020. The individual rehabilitation programme has also been extended for six months.²⁷⁵
- **[9 April 2020]** There has been a simplification of the disability status granting process, and the disability status could be obtained remotely until 1 October 2020.²⁷⁶ The simplification has enabled more citizens to access and receive disability pensions during the pandemic.²⁷⁷
- **[21 May 2020]** It has been announced that veterans and persons with disabilities of the Great Patriotic War, children with disabilities, those having disabilities since childhood (1st category), and other persons with disabilities (1st and 2nd categories) would not need to pay for visits by workers of the Federal Service for State Registration, Cadastre and Cartography. The state would cover the expenses.²⁷⁸

Institutions and facilities

- **[23 April 2020]** Visitation to neuropsychiatric boarding schools has been restricted to reduce risk of infection. Remote communication between residents and families has been encouraged, rather than in-person visits.²⁷⁹
- **[8 June 2020]** The state would award social workers in residential care facilities with confirmed COVID-19 cases a benefit of 35,000 roubles. For those working at facilities with no confirmed cases, the benefit would be 25,000 roubles.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁰ <https://tass.com/society/1176671>

²⁷¹ <https://tass.com/society/1160663>

²⁷² <http://government.ru/en/news/39773/>

²⁷³ https://xn--80aesfpebagmblc0a.xn--p1ai/what-is-done/social-measures/pomosch_lyudyam_s_invalidnostyu.html

²⁷⁴ <http://government.ru/en/news/39701/>

²⁷⁵ https://xn--80aesfpebagmblc0a.xn--p1ai/what-is-done/social-measures/pomosch_lyudyam_s_invalidnostyu.html

²⁷⁶ <http://government.ru/en/news/39452/>

²⁷⁷ https://xn--80aesfpebagmblc0a.xn--p1ai/what-is-done/social-measures/pomosch_lyudyam_s_invalidnostyu.html

²⁷⁸ <http://government.ru/en/news/39724/>

²⁷⁹ <https://tass.ru/obshchestvo/8316337>

²⁸⁰ <http://government.ru/en/news/39839/>

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19 (in Russian): <https://xn--80aesfpebagmfb1c0a.xn--p1ai>
- Federal Service for the Oversight of Consumer Protection and Welfare (in Russian): <https://www.rospotrebnadzor.ru/about/info/news>

Disability focal point

- Department of Disabled People Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (in Russian): <https://mintrud.gov.ru>

Samoa

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [17 April 2020] In the Preliminary Stakeholder Engagement Plan, stakeholders of the proposed COVID-19 project include vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities.²⁸¹

Accessible public information

- [n.d.] The Prime Minister has been accompanied by a sign language interpreter in press conferences.²⁸²

Social protection and employment support

- [n.d.] The government has proposed a recovery package worth 500 million Samoan tala. The Samoa Worker's Congress has asked the government to consider certain aspects, including that persons with disabilities should be part of the primary target groups of economic support.²⁸³
- [n.d.] Cash grants have been made available to vulnerable groups including persons with disabilities.²⁸⁴

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health: <https://www.health.gov.ws/covid-19>

Disability focal point

- Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development: <https://www.mwcsd.gov.ws>

Singapore

²⁸¹ <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/900511587137018080/text/Stakeholder-Engagement-Plan-SEP-Samoa-COVID-19-Emergency-Response-Project-P173920.txt>

²⁸² <https://disabilityrightsfund.org/covid-19-nola/>

²⁸³ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#WS>

²⁸⁴ <https://samoa.un.org/en/52796-samoas-second-voluntary-national-review-implementation-sustainable-development-goals>

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[11 November 2020]** The Minister for Social and Family Development has held discussions with members of the disability community on how to achieve a more inclusive and caring future in Singapore as the country recovers from the pandemic.²⁸⁵

Continued access to goods and services

- **[n.d.]** The Ministry of Social and Family Development would continue providing essential services with heightened safe distancing measures. For persons with disabilities with higher care needs, and for those whose caregivers need alternative care arrangements, selected community-based centres would remain open to provide critical therapy and care intervention.²⁸⁶
- **[n.d.]** The NEU PC Plus Programme has been offering low-income households with students or persons with disabilities the opportunity to own a brand-new computer at an affordable price. The Programme has helped students to have digital access to home-based learning.²⁸⁷
- **[24 March 2020]** Older persons, pregnant women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups have been given dedicated shopping hours at several leading supermarket chains.²⁸⁸
- **[13 April 2020]** Social service agencies and community groups providing essential aid for vulnerable groups could seek approval from the National Council of Social Service to continue their activities.²⁸⁹
- **[19 May 2020]** Community disability facilities would gradually reopen with safe distancing measures in place.²⁹⁰

Accessible public information

- **[27 July 2020]** Accessible information has been made available by the government. Informative videos have been captioned and posted on the government's Youtube channel to cater to the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing persons. Besides the provision of sign language interpretation services for key live government communications, information at government websites, public healthcare institutions, and social service agencies has been made accessible.²⁹¹

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[9 June 2021]** The Ministry of Health has announced plans to improve quarantine procedures for persons with disabilities, train healthcare staff on disability inclusion and examine less intrusive COVID-19 testing options.²⁹²

²⁸⁵ <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/120-from-disability-community-discuss-how-to-create-more-inclusive-and-caring-society>

²⁸⁶ <https://www.msf.gov.sg/media-room/Pages/Ensuring-continued-social-assistance-and-essential-services-for-vulnerable-groups.aspx>

²⁸⁷ [https://www.enablingguide.sg/resources/latest-information-on-coronavirus-disease-2019-\(covid-19\)](https://www.enablingguide.sg/resources/latest-information-on-coronavirus-disease-2019-(covid-19))

²⁸⁸ <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/coronavirus-seniors-pregnant-women-people-with-disabilities-to-get-their-own-daily>

²⁸⁹ <https://www.ncss.gov.sg/NCSS/media/NCSS-Advisories/130420-Infographic-on-Essential-Aid-Distribution-During-Circuit-Breaker.pdf>

²⁹⁰ <https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/end-of-circuit-breaker-phased-approach-to-resuming-activities-safely>

²⁹¹ <https://www.mfa.gov.sg/Overseas-Mission/Geneva/Mission-Updates/2020/07/Singapore-Reply-to-the-JC-for-SPMH-Covid-19-27-July-2020>

²⁹² <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/health/moh-to-improve-covid-19-testing-procedures-quarantine-process-for-persons-with>

Social protection and employment support

- [n.d.] The Social Service Office of the Ministry of Social and Family Development has extended social and financial assistance to persons in need through the Temporary Relief Fund, the COVID-19 Support Grant and ComCare assistance schemes.²⁹³
- [30 July 2020] The Ministry of Social and Family Development has moved job support initiatives online as far as possible during the pandemic, with accessibility considerations for persons with disabilities.²⁹⁴

Institutions and facilities

- [8 May 2020] To limit transmission amongst vulnerable groups, the Ministry of Health, the Agency for Integrated Care and the Ministry of Social and Family Development have initiated testing for 30,000 residents and staff of nursing homes, welfare homes, sheltered homes and adult disability homes.²⁹⁵
- [19 May 2020] There have been enhanced precautionary measures for residential facilities and community-based services.²⁹⁶

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health: <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19>
- Ministry of Social and Family Development: <https://www.msf.gov.sg/media-room/Pages/COVID-19-advisory.aspx>

Disability focal point

- Disability Division, Ministry of Social and Family Development: <https://www.msf.gov.sg/Pages/default.aspx>

Solomon Islands

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [10 April 2020] The Stakeholder Engagement Plan of Solomon Islands COVID-19 Response includes vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities as stakeholders.²⁹⁷
- [10 April 2020] In the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan, measures have been introduced to ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable groups would have equal access to development benefits resulting from the COVID-19 Emergency Response Project.²⁹⁸
- [4 September 2020] The Health Promotion Department of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services has reviewed the COVID-19 Risk Communications Strategy with partners, including People With Disability Solomon Islands.²⁹⁹

²⁹³ <https://www.msf.gov.sg/media-room/Pages/Ensuring-continued-social-assistance-and-essential-services-for-vulnerable-groups.aspx>

²⁹⁴ <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/govt-agencies-to-help-job-seekers-with-disabilities>

²⁹⁵ <https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/support-measures-for-seniors-during-covid-19>

²⁹⁶ <https://www.msf.gov.sg/media-room/Pages/COVID-19-advisory.aspx>

²⁹⁷ https://solomons.gov.sb/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SEP_-COVID-19-Solomon-Islands-final_20204109648.pdf

²⁹⁸ https://solomons.gov.sb/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ESCP-COVID-19-Solomon-Islands-final_20204109636.pdf

²⁹⁹ <https://solomons.gov.sb/mhms-health-promotion-department-reviews-covid-19-risk-communication-strategy-with-partners/>

Continued access to goods and services

- **[August 2020]** The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development has created a COVID-19 Inclusive Education Materials package for children with disabilities and their parents. Teachers from disability schools and the selected mainstream school in Honiara have been trained on COVID-19 issues.³⁰⁰

Accessible public information

- **[n.d.]** The Prime Minister has been accompanied by a sign language interpreter in press briefings on COVID-19.³⁰¹
- **[13 August 2020]** The Ministry of Health and Medical Services has supported the initiatives of People with Disability Solomon Islands to raise awareness of COVID-19 among persons with disabilities. A training session would help volunteers and staff of the organization to spread information on COVID-19 in various institutions across provinces.³⁰²

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website: <https://solomons.gov.sb/ministry-of-health-medical-services/essential-services/learn-about-coronavirus>

Disability focal point

- Rehabilitation Division, Ministry of Health and Medical Services: <https://solomons.gov.sb/ministry-of-health-medical-services>

Sri Lanka

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[3 May 2020]** Persons with disabilities would be consulted on the Sri Lanka COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan highlights accessible communication strategies for persons with disabilities.³⁰³

Accessible public information

- **[n.d.]** The Ministry of Health has released an infographic on preventative measures against COVID-19 for wheelchair users.³⁰⁴

Social protection and employment support

- **[n.d.]** Samurdhi (a poverty alleviation programme) beneficiaries and other vulnerable households would receive weekly food rations (rice, lentils, and onions).³⁰⁵

³⁰⁰ <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/application-and-program-document-covid-19-accelerated-funding-solomon-islands-2020>

³⁰¹ <https://www.facebook.com/watch/opmcpress/>

³⁰² <https://solomons.gov.sb/building-capacity-of-people-with-special-needs-to-join-efforts-against-covid-19/>

³⁰³ http://www.health.gov.lk/moh_final/english/public/elfinder/files/projects/SCERHSPP/SEPdraftVer01.pdf

³⁰⁴ http://www.health.gov.lk/moh_final/english/public/elfinder/files/feturesArtical/2020/YED/wheel%20chair%20users%20-english.pdf

³⁰⁵ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#LK>

- [23 March 2020] Actions have been taken to issue older persons' allowances and disability allowances via Grama Niladharis (village officers).³⁰⁶
- [30 March 2020] The Presidential Task Force has provided a one-off cash transfer of LKR 5,000 for vulnerable groups, including 559,109 older persons, 119,300 persons with disabilities, and 160,675 farmers insured by the Farmers Insurance Scheme.³⁰⁷
- [14 May 2020] The LKR 5000 allowance has been paid for the second time to older persons, persons with disabilities, and persons suffering from kidney ailments.³⁰⁸

Institutions and facilities

- [4 May 2020] The Labor Management Procedure of the COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project introduces measures to support workers in care homes for older persons, persons with disabilities, and orphans.³⁰⁹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19: <https://covid19.gov.lk>
- Ministry of Health: <http://www.epid.gov.lk/web/index.php?lang=en>

Disability focal point

- National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities, State Ministry of Samurdhi, Household Economy, Micro Finance, Self Employment Business Development: http://stateminsamurdhi.gov.lk/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=featured&Itemid=101&lang=en

Tajikistan

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [5 May 2020] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has held a virtual meeting with the International Committee of the Red Cross. The parties have discussed bilateral cooperation in various fields such as supporting persons with disabilities and exchanged views on stopping the spread of COVID-19.³¹⁰

Accessible Public Information

- [22 June 2020] A short video on COVID-19 that is accessible to persons with disabilities has been created by the National Association of Persons with Disabilities in collaboration with the WHO and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population.³¹¹

³⁰⁶ <https://www.newsfirst.lk/2020/03/23/presidents-secretary-gives-instructions-to-ensure-smooth-operations-of-state-apparatus-during-covid-19-operations/>

³⁰⁷ <http://www.pmdnews.lk/கொரோனா-அச்சுறுத்தலுக்கு/>

³⁰⁸ <https://www.news.lk/news/political-current-affairs/item/30133-7-4-million-to-receive-rs-5000-allowance-in-april-min-bandula-gunawardhena>

³⁰⁹

http://www.health.gov.lk/moh_final/english/public/elfinder/files/projects/SCERHSPP/LMPdraftVer01.pdf

³¹⁰ <https://eng.khovar.tj/2020/05/fm-muhriddin-holds-video-conference-with-icrc-president-maurer/>

³¹¹ <https://www.apminebanconvention.org/fileadmin/APMBC/IWP/IM-june-july20/written-submissions/IM2020-all-Tajikistan.pdf>

Social protection and employment support

- [23 May 2020] The Dushanbe Chairman has provided 500 tons of essential food products worth more than 2.5 million somonis for 5,000 needy families, persons with disabilities, patients, orphans, and homeless people.³¹²
- [6 June 2020] The Government has provided a one-time payment equivalent to a month's minimum wage for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities.³¹³

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population: website unavailable

Disability focal point

- Department of Social Protection, Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population: website unavailable

Thailand

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [29 April 2020] A factory run by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, which provides job opportunities for persons with disabilities, has been producing special face masks that enable lip-reading while staying protected.³¹⁴

Accessible public information

- [16 April 2020] The Ministry of Public Health provides information on COVID-19 in sign language and braille.³¹⁵

Social protection and employment support

- [28 April 2020] The Cabinet has approved the payment of an extra Bt 1,000 to each disability card holder in addition to their monthly allowances, aiming to ease the burden on persons with disabilities amid the COVID-19 pandemic.³¹⁶
- [26 May 2020] The Social Development and Human Security Ministry has made a proposal to the Cabinet to provide cash transfer for vulnerable groups that had not benefited from the Rao Mai Thing Gun cash handout programme of the Ministry of Finance or the campaigns organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. The primary beneficiaries are older persons, persons with disabilities and parents of new-born infants.³¹⁷ The Cabinet has agreed to set aside Bt 39.42 billion to finance a new cash handout programme for 13.14 million extremely vulnerable people.³¹⁸

³¹² <https://eng.khovar.tj/2020/05/dushanbe-chairman-provides-assistance-to-5-000-families-and-road-service-employees/>

³¹³ <https://eng.khovar.tj/2020/06/president-emomali-rahmon-signs-executive-order-to-mitigate-effects-of-covid-19-on-economy/>

³¹⁴ <https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/thai-factory-makes-covid-masks-hearing-impaired>

³¹⁵ https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/searo/thailand/2020-04-16-tha-sitrep-54-covid19.pdf?sfvrsn=ec2d1d78_0

³¹⁶ https://www.nationthailand.com/news/30386927?utm_source=category&utm_medium=internal_referral

³¹⁷ https://www.nationthailand.com/news/30388495?utm_source=category&utm_medium=internal_referral

³¹⁸ <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/1924668/b39bn-for-handouts-gets-nod>

- **[3 June 2020]** The Office of the Basic Education Commission has allocated a budget for food to students who were learning remotely, including students with disabilities and underprivileged students.³¹⁹
- **[30 July 2020]** The Permanent Secretary of Labour has discussed measures to support workers with disabilities affected by COVID-19 with the Association of Persons with Disabilities. The Association has proposed to accelerate government agencies' hiring of persons with disabilities.³²⁰

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health:
<https://ddc.moph.go.th/viralpneumonia/eng/index.php>

Disability focal point

- Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security: <http://portal.dep.go.th>

Timor-Leste

Government responses

Continued access to goods and services

- **[17 April 2020]** The Ministry of Health has worked with UNICEF to ensure continued learning for children during school closures. An e-book for parents and guardians on how to explain COVID-19 to children with disabilities has been developed.³²¹

Accessible public information

- **[2 May 2020]** Updates on COVID-19 provided by the COVID-19 Crisis Management Center through National Television have included sign language interpretation services.³²²
- **[28 January 2021]** The Ministry of Health has been working with UNICEF to develop materials in braille and sign language to ensure persons with disabilities have access to COVID-19 information.³²³

Social protection and employment support

- **[20 April 2020]** The government has introduced a package of socio-economic support initiatives for poor and vulnerable households to combat COVID-19, including a universal cash transfer system and emergency rice supply.³²⁴

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website: <http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?cat=32&lang=en>

³¹⁹ <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/1928424/remote-learning-to-stay-if-virus-persists>

³²⁰ <https://www.mol.go.th/en/news/association-of-persons-with-disabilities-of-thailand-discusses-alleviation-measures-for-covid-19-impacted-people-with-permanent-secretary-of-labour/>

³²¹ <https://www.unicef.org/timorleste/stories/unicef-supports-covid-19-response-timor-leste>

³²² <https://shapesea.com/op-ed/covid-19/is-everyone-on-board-achieving-inclusive-communication-in-timor-leste-amid-covid-19/>

³²³ <https://www.unicef.org/timorleste/stories/improving-access-information-children-and-people-disabilities-timor-leste>

³²⁴ <http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?p=24159&lang=en&lang=en>

Disability focal point

- National Director of Social Assistance, Ministry of Social Solidarity:
<http://www.mss.gov.tl/portal/>

Tonga

Government responses

Social protection and employment support

- **[2 April 2020]** In Tonga, 1.3 million Tongan pa'anga has been designated for the Safety and Protection Cluster. This aims to increase the welfare scheme for vulnerable people, including persons with disabilities, as well as to support community policing and other activities.³²⁵
- **[2 April 2020]** A cash transfer of \$100 per person has been offered to Elderly Benefit and Disability Benefit receivers, in addition to regular benefits.³²⁶
- **[19 May 2020]** The Government has increased monthly payments to older persons and persons with disabilities to assist them in mitigating the impact of COVID-19.³²⁷
- **[16 December 2020]** The World Bank has committed \$30 million to aid the state in supporting the most vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, in the wake of COVID-19 and Cyclone Harold. The funding will be used for social welfare payments.³²⁸

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health: <http://www.health.gov.to/en/covid19-information>

Disability focal point

- Social Protection and Disability Division, Ministry of Internal Affairs:
<https://mia.gov.to>

Turkey

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[2 December 2020]** Persons with disabilities have been exempted from the prohibition on vehicle usage during weekend curfews.³²⁹

Continued access to goods and services

- **[n.d.]** Nursing homes for older persons and persons with disabilities would provide services without seeking any criteria of eligibility for three months.³³⁰
- **[14 May 2020]** Measures have been put in place to ensure that people aged 65 and over and those with chronic diseases could communicate their needs to the authorities by calling the numbers 112, 155 and 156.³³¹

³²⁵ http://www.gov.to/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-Pamphlet_Final1.pdf

³²⁶ <https://nukualofatimes.tbu.to/2020/04/02/tonga-sets-60-million-paanga-to-counter-coronavirus-impact/>

³²⁷ <http://www.tonga-broadcasting.net/?p=18447>

³²⁸ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/12/16/30-million-in-support-for-tongas-most-vulnerable>

³²⁹ <https://help.unhcr.org/turkey/coronavirus/announcements/>

³³⁰ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#TR>

³³¹ <https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/vefa-sosyal-destek-gruplari-6649461-haneyeye-ulasti>

- **[25 June 2020]** Financially supported by the World Bank, the Ministry of National Education would implement the Safe Schooling and Distance Education Project. The needs of vulnerable students, including children with disabilities, would be accommodated to ensure their access to e-learning.³³²
- **[1 March 2021]** Persons with disabilities have been allowed to collect medicines from a pharmacy without first seeing their doctors.³³³

Accessible public information

- **[1 March 2021]** The Ministry of Health has arranged sign language translations of 36 information guides regarding COVID-19.³³⁴

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[9 April 2020]** A circular on COVID-19 measures has been sent to 81 Provincial Governorships. It has been advised that children and young people with special needs should be allowed to leave their residences for walks and travel by vehicle in the same province, as being contained in a closed environment could have adverse effects on their well-being.³³⁵
- **[30 June 2020]** The Ministry of Health has collaborated with the WHO to create a helpline to aid those struggling with their mental health as a result of the pandemic. Helpline staff deliver specially designed technical guidance for persons with disabilities and those supporting them³³⁶
- **[1 March 2021]** Should a person with psychosocial disabilities suspected of COVID-19 be sent to hospital, they have been allowed to be accompanied.³³⁷

Social protection and employment support

- **[n.d.]** The monthly money transfer to the Social Benevolent and Solidarity Associations has been increased to 180 million TRY from 135 million TRY, with the aim of protecting the most disadvantaged groups.³³⁸
- **[11 April 2020]** The Vefa Social Support Groups have been active in providing basic needs such as bread for the most vulnerable in self-isolation.³³⁹ Compromised of local governorate officials, police and gendarmerie units, the groups have regularly paid home visits to people aged over 65 and those with underlying health conditions.³⁴⁰
- **[19 May 2020]** Social assistance for older persons and persons with disabilities would be distributed without seeking income criteria and severe disability status.³⁴¹
- **[1 March 2021]** The Ministry of Health has ruled that employees with disabilities should be given administrative holiday when the epidemic was at its peak.³⁴²

Institutions and facilities

- **[n.d.]** Vaccination priority has been given to social care workers and residents at rehabilitation centres for persons with disabilities.³⁴³

³³² <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/06/25/responding-to-covid-19-and-looking-beyond-turkey-invests-in-safer-schooling-and-distance-education-with-the-world-bank-support>

³³³ <https://www.erciyesmedj.com/jvi.aspx?un=EMJ-65725&volume=>

³³⁴ <https://www.erciyesmedj.com/jvi.aspx?un=EMJ-65725&volume=>

³³⁵ <https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/81-il-valiligine-ozel-gereksinimi-olan-cocuk-ve-gencler-genelgesi>

³³⁶ <https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-emergencies/coronavirus-covid-19/news/news/2020/6/who-backed-telephone-counselling-in-turkey-for-those-dealing-with-covid-19-stress>

³³⁷ <https://www.erciyesmedj.com/jvi.aspx?un=EMJ-65725&volume=>

³³⁸ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#TR>

³³⁹ <https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/vefa-social-support-groups-to-provide-citizens-with-bread-over-curfew-period/news>

³⁴⁰ <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/even-well-off-people-are-calling-social-support-groups-155080>

³⁴¹ http://unprpd.org/sites/default/files/Overview%20response_1.4.pdf

³⁴² <https://www.erciyesmedj.com/jvi.aspx?un=EMJ-65725&volume=>

³⁴³ <https://covid19asi.saglik.gov.tr/EN-80295/list-of-covid-19-vaccination-groups.html>

- **[14 March 2020]** A COVID-19 guide for care institutions of persons with disabilities and older persons has been released, including awareness-raising and training amongst staff and patients, temporary changes to visiting regulations, and ensuring sufficient hygienic items and practice.³⁴⁴
- **[6 April 2020]** The government has taken measures to prevent overcrowding in prisons. Prisoners aged over 65 and in need of assistance due to chronic diseases or disabilities might leave penitentiary institutions until May 31 and be monitored through electronic devices.³⁴⁵
- **[16 April 2020]** The Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services would bear expenses for older persons and persons with disabilities living in private nursing homes and care centres.³⁴⁶
- **[1 March 2021]** Persons with disabilities living in institutions have had specific isolation institutions created for them, where they can undergo 14 days' quarantine with support and nursing should they contract COVID-19.³⁴⁷

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health: <https://covid19.saglik.gov.tr>
- Digital Transformation Office (in Turkish): <https://corona.cbddo.gov.tr>

Disability focal point

- Directorate General of Disabled and Elderly Services, Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services: <https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr>

Turkmenistan

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[August 2020]** The UN has collaborated with the government to create a socio-economic response plan to the pandemic, which introduces several measures for persons with disabilities. Such measures include special referral transportation services for those in need of specialized medical treatment, attention to ensuring the availability of medical supplies, social workers, and counselling for vulnerable groups, as well as funds for improved data monitoring on disability.³⁴⁸
- **[7 December 2020]** The Stakeholder Engagement Plan of the COVID-19 Response Project includes persons with disabilities as one of the vulnerable groups to be engaged and consulted.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁴ <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/koronavirus/bakanliktan-engelli-ve-yasli-bakim-kuruluslarina-koronavirus-rehberi/1766008>

³⁴⁵ <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/legislation/fate-of-90000-prisoners-during-plague-to-be-determined-by-turkish-parliament-with-new-policy>

³⁴⁶ <https://www.dailysabah.com/business/economy/turkey-passes-bill-to-cushion-covid-19-fallout-protect-economic-social-life>

³⁴⁷ <https://www.erciyesmedj.com/jvi.aspx?un=EMJ-65725&volume=>

³⁴⁸ <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/immediate-socio-economic-response-plan-acute-infectious-disease-pandemic-turkmenistan>

³⁴⁹ <https://www.saglykhm.gov.tm/home>

for older persons, persons with disabilities and others in need.³⁵⁵ Similar public work has been conducted in several other regions.³⁵⁶

Accessible public information

- **[3 December 2020]** The UNDP has partnered with UzReport TV to ensure that all the government's COVID-19 briefings were accompanied by sign language interpretation services.³⁵⁷

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[24 March 2021]** Persons with disabilities have been prioritized in the first stage of vaccine roll-out.³⁵⁸

Social protection and employment support

- **[n.d.]** Examples of new working arrangements include allowing employees, particularly pregnant women, older persons, and persons with disabilities, to use distance-working methods with flexible working hours.³⁵⁹
- **[3 April 2020]** The Center for Coordinating Sponsorship Activities has been established to provide charitable assistance, such as food and medicine, for families in need and persons with disabilities.³⁶⁰ According to a decree signed by the president, lonely older persons and persons with disabilities would be offered basic food and hygiene items free of charge during the quarantine period.³⁶¹
- **[10 July 2020]** There has been a simplified system for issuing documents on temporary disabilities.³⁶²
- **[30 July 2020]** Disability-related benefits have been increased.³⁶³

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health (in Uzbek/Russian): <https://coronavirus.uz/uz>

Disability focal point

- Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations: <https://mehnat.uz/en>

Vanuatu

³⁵⁵ <https://mehnat.uz/en/news/in-tashkent-during-quarantine-and-restriction-activities-the-population-is-involved-in-public-works>

³⁵⁶ <https://mehnat.uz/en/news/during-the-covid-19-pandemic-measures-are-being-taken-to-provide-employment-for-the-unemployed-and-reduce-poverty>

³⁵⁷ <https://www.undp.org/content/uzbekistan/en/home/presscenter/articles/2020/12/international-day-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-the-year-of-co.html>

³⁵⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-uzbekistan-vaccina-idUSKBN2BG0OQ>

³⁵⁹ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#UZ>

³⁶⁰ http://uza.uz/en/society/center-for-coordinating-sponsorship-activities-provides-char-03-04-2020?sphrase_id=21367212

³⁶¹ http://uza.uz/en/business/president-shavkat-mirziyoyev-signs-another-decree-to-support-04-04-2020?sphrase_id=21367212

³⁶² <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/454671594649637530/pdf/Social-Protection-and-Jobs-Responses-to-COVID-19-A-Real-Time-Review-of-Country-Measures.pdf>

³⁶³ <https://cis-legislation.com/document.fwx?rgn=126605>

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[July 2020]** The Vanuatu Recovery Strategy 2020-2023 explicitly mentions supporting and protecting persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.³⁶⁴

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health: <https://covid19.gov.vu>
- Natural Disaster Management Office: <https://ndmo.gov.vu/covid-19>

Disability focal point

- Ministry of Justice and Community Services: <https://mjcs.gov.vu>

Viet Nam

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[20 April 2020]** The Ministry of Health has issued a manual on prevention of respiratory infections caused by COVID-19 for persons with disabilities in the community.³⁶⁵
- **[3 June 2020]** The Agency of Health Examination and Treatment of the Ministry of Health has signed a memorandum of understanding on rehabilitation activities for persons with disabilities with eight NGOs. The head of the Agency has pointed out that rehabilitation activities could help the health recovery of critical COVID-19 infection cases.³⁶⁶

Continued access to goods and services

- **[4 June 2020]** UNICEF has supported the Ministry of Education and Training in developing and implementing an inclusive distance learning strategy to ensure continued education during the pandemic, especially for the most vulnerable.³⁶⁷

Accessible public information

- **[30 April 2020]** The Ministry of Health has informed people of COVID-19 protection measures with a video in sign language.³⁶⁸
- **[11 May 2020]** The UNDP has supported the national channel VTV1 to expand sign language interpretation during main news bulletins.³⁶⁹

Social protection and employment support

- **[9 April 2020]** Hanoi has allocated 650 billion VND (28.2 million USD) to help the poor and other social beneficiaries through local branches of the Vietnam Bank for Social Policies (VBSP) during the COVID-19 pandemic.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁴ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/tc_harold_and_covid-19_vanuatu_recovery_strategy_v3_130820.pdf

³⁶⁵ <https://ncov.moh.gov.vn/web/guest/-/nguoi-khuyet-tat-uoc-quan-tam-phong-chong-ay-lui-va-chien-thang-dich-covid-19>

³⁶⁶ <http://news.chinhphu.vn/Home/Health-Ministry-joins-hands-with-NGOs-in-rehabilitation-activities/20206/40331.vgp>

³⁶⁷ <https://reliefweb.int/report/viet-nam/unicef-viet-nam-country-office-covid-19-situation-report-no-4-reporting-period-14>

³⁶⁸ <https://viettimes.vn/bo-y-te-huong-dan-phong-chong-covid19-cho-nguoi-diec-nguoi-khuyet-tat-388547.html>

³⁶⁹ https://www.vn.undp.org/content/vietnam/en/home/library/democratic_governance/ImpactPWds.html

³⁷⁰ <http://english.molisa.gov.vn/Pages/News/Detail.aspx?tintucID=222477>

- **[16 April 2020]** The Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs has allocated 300 million VND for the fight against the pandemic, focusing on supporting social policy beneficiaries and low-income households.³⁷¹
- **[4 December 2020]** Additional cash transfers of VND 500,000 per month have been offered to persons with disabilities.³⁷²

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Ministry of Health (in Vietnamese): <https://ncov.moh.gov.vn>

Disability focal point

- Office of National Coordinating Council on Disabilities, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs: <http://english.molisa.gov.vn/Pages/home.aspx>

³⁷¹ <http://english.molisa.gov.vn/Pages/News/Detail.aspx?tintucID=222530>

³⁷² https://asean.org/?static_post=asean-rapid-assessment-impact-covid-19-livelihoods-across-asean

II. RESPONSES BY ESCAP ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

America Samoa

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [5 February 2021] Persons with disabilities who cannot wear a mask due to their disability have been exempted from compulsory mask wearing.³⁷³

Accessible public information

- [n.d.] The Office of Protection & Advocacy for the Disabled posts updates and guidance on their Facebook page, such as tips for social distancing, information on COVID-19 by and for persons with disabilities, accessing mental health services, and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities during the pandemic.³⁷⁴

Social Protection and Employment Support

- [10 March 2021] The third round of COVID-19 stimulus payments would include payments for adult dependents with disabilities.³⁷⁵

Institutions and facilities

- [18 March 2020] Restriction measures would be imposed when the state of emergency was declared. The Hope House for older persons and persons with disabilities³⁷⁶ would be closed for visitation under Code Yellow (one confirmed case in American Samoa).³⁷⁷

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website: <https://www.americansamoa.gov>

Disability focal point

- Office of Protection & Advocacy for the Disabled:
<https://www.facebook.com/protectionadvocacy684>

Cook Islands

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [10 March 2020] The Emergency Response Plan to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) introduces measures for persons with disabilities in terms of clinical care and public health management, social welfare and support, as well as communication and consultation.³⁷⁸

³⁷³ <https://corporate.southpacificislands.travel/new-covid-19-measures-in-american-samoa/>

³⁷⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/protectionadvocacy684/>

³⁷⁵ <https://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/financial-resilience-center/stimulus/>

³⁷⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/DSPPFatuaiga/>

³⁷⁷ <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency/american-samoa-declaration-public-health-emergency-and-state-emergency-covid-19>

³⁷⁸ https://cit-covid19.s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/CookIslandsEmergencyResponsePlanCOVID19_Mar2020.pdf

Continued access to goods and services

- [November 2020] Disability outpatient services have been relocated to enable physical separation from where COVID-19 cases would be treated.³⁷⁹

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- [26 February 2021] Persons with disabilities have been considered and prioritized within the Cook Islands' vaccine roll-out.³⁸⁰

Social protection and employment support

- [n.d.] The one-off welfare payment of \$400 has been given to old age pensioners, caregivers and the infirm and destitute who are registered with the Ministry of Internal Affairs.³⁸¹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19: <https://covid19.gov.ck>
- Ministry of Health: <https://www.health.gov.ck/covid19>

Disability focal point

- Ministry of Internal Affairs: <https://www.intaff.gov.ck>

French Polynesia

Government responses

Accessible public information

- [13 March 2020] The Direction de la Santé has posted COVID-19 instructions for persons with disabilities and older persons on its website (in French).³⁸²

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Direction de la Santé (in French): <https://www.service-public.pf/dsp/covid-19>

Disability focal point

- Ministre des Solidarités et de la Santé:
<http://archives2.presidence.pf/index.php/extensions>

Guam

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [17 July 2020] Crisis counselling providers have been encouraged to train staff on disability related topics and to make services more accessible.³⁸³

³⁷⁹ <https://www.adb.org/projects/documents/coo-54289-001-rrp>

³⁸⁰ <https://www.health.gov.ck/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/COVID-19-Vaccine-Information-Sheet-update.pdf>

³⁸¹ <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#CK>

³⁸² <https://www.service-public.pf/dsp/portfolio-items/conduite-a-tenir-personnes-age-handicape-vulnerable/>

³⁸³ <https://www.fema.gov/case-study/crisis-counseling-services-people-disabilities-during-covid-19>

Continued access to goods and services

- **[n.d.]** Guidance and updates have been offered by the Department of Education regarding support for children with disabilities during school closures.³⁸⁴
- **[17 March 2020]** The Bureau of Economic Security of the Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services would continue assisting beneficiaries of the following programmes: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Cash Assistance Programs, Medicaid, Medically Indigent Program (MIP) and Child Care Development Fund Block Grant. Older persons and persons with disabilities requiring assistance have been allowed to access office locations with one companion.³⁸⁵
- **[10 April 2020]** The Guam Housing and Urban Renewal Authority has been awarded more than \$2.6 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to combat COVID-19 through non-profit and government service providers. These providers would bring relief and services to homeless people and persons with disabilities, amongst other groups.³⁸⁶
- **[17 May 2020]** The Guam Department of Revenue and Taxation office has issued special arrangements in anticipation of reopening.³⁸⁷ This includes special opening hours to provide services for persons with disabilities, older persons, and veterans.³⁸⁸
- **[8 June 2020]** The Guam Department of Labor Processing Center has prioritized appointment slots for persons with disabilities, older persons, and veterans to assist them in applying for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation.³⁸⁹

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[19 August 2020]** The Guam Memorial Hospital Authority has restricted in-person visits, with exemptions made for children/minors, patients with disabilities and high-risk patients.³⁹⁰
- **[22 January 2021]** The COVID-19 vaccination programme has expanded vaccine eligibility to persons with disabilities.³⁹¹

Social protection and employment support

- **[16 April 2020]** Disaster Household Distribution has been approved,³⁹² which includes providing persons with disabilities with food aid.³⁹³
- **[16 June 2020]** Senators have approved a bill to distribute \$500 cash assistance to each eligible member of a qualified family. Special arrangements have been made for persons with permanent disabilities.³⁹⁴

³⁸⁴ <http://guam.cyberschool.com/District/Department/2-Special-Education/1950-Special-Education-FAQ.html>

³⁸⁵ <https://www.ghs.guam.gov/jic-release-no-9-dphss-continues-provide-some-services-update-behavioral-health-services>

³⁸⁶ <https://www.ghs.guam.gov/jic-release-no-66-profiles-earlier-confirmed-cases-road-closure-traffic-flow-plan-effect-saturday>

³⁸⁷ https://www.guamtax.com/frontpagenotices/covid19/2020_DRT_COVID-19_Services_Series_Volume_3.pdf

³⁸⁸ <https://www.ghs.guam.gov/jic-release-no-129-update-quarantine-facilities-expanded-testing-continues-continue-practice-caution>

³⁸⁹ https://www.postguam.com/news/local/jobless-benefits-processing-center-opens-june-15/article_5fb643f8-a882-11ea-9ec6-fb00945b7017.html

³⁹⁰ <https://www.gmha.org/guide/visiting/>

³⁹¹ <https://www.guampdn.com/story/news/local/2021/01/21/vaccine-go-school-workers-people-disabilities-next/6667433002/>

³⁹² <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/WRO-Guam-COV-DHD-Final-Approval.pdf>

³⁹³ <https://www.ghs.guam.gov/jic-release-no-556-dphss-issues-guidance-memo-2021-04homebound-covid-19-vaccination-schedule-dphss>

³⁹⁴ https://www.postguam.com/news/local/senators-ok-10m-aid-health-insurance-choice/article_b41c32f4-aec2-11ea-8826-ab75027d9f71.html

- **[4 September 2020]** Two bills amending the \$500 aid programme have been passed unanimously by the Guam Legislature.³⁹⁵
- **[13 March 2021]** A third round of COVID-19 stimulus payments would be likely to include dependents of any age, including college students, those with disabilities, and elderly parents.³⁹⁶

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Department of Public Health and Social Services: <http://dphss.guam.gov/covid-19>
- Guam Homeland Security Office of Civil Defense: <https://ghs.guam.gov/coronavirus-covid-19>

Disability focal point

- Department of Integrated Services for Individuals with Disabilities: <http://disid.guam.gov>

Hong Kong, China

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- **[n.d.]** Persons who cannot wear a mask due to physical or mental illness, impairment or disability have been exempted from the Prevention and Control of Disease (Wearing of Mask) Regulation. The exemption also applies to persons assisting another person who relies on lip-reading to communicate.³⁹⁷

Continued access to goods and services

- **[9 May 2020]** The gradual reintroduction of rehabilitation services has begun with extra precautions. Service operators have been instructed to keep their service users informed of recent arrangements and to ensure the provision of PPE to staff.³⁹⁸

Accessible public information

- **[19 May 2020]** The government media session on COVID-19 has provided sign language interpretation services.³⁹⁹

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[15 September 2020]** The Social Welfare Department has prepared quarantine facilities⁴⁰⁰ for residents at residential care homes for older persons and persons with disabilities.⁴⁰¹

Social protection and employment support

- **[14 February 2020]** Special considerations have been made regarding persons in receipt of disability allowance who, owing to the pandemic, had not satisfied residence requirement for social welfare; they have been told there is no rush to return to Hong Kong.⁴⁰²

³⁹⁵ https://www.postguam.com/news/local/senators-pass-bills-on-500-aid-program/article_4f1f2306-ecf8-11ea-ac88-1738bcc1f422.html

³⁹⁶ <https://www.pncguam.com/this-time-dependents-of-any-age-may-qualify-for-covid-relief-money/>

³⁹⁷ https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/599i_faq_annex_en.pdf

³⁹⁸ <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202005/09/P2020050900397.htm>

³⁹⁹ https://webcast.info.gov.hk/revamp/eng/video/0000000809_mp4.html

⁴⁰⁰ https://www.news.gov.hk/eng/2020/09/20200929/20200929_211328_345.html

⁴⁰¹ https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/fund/20200915-pressreleaseppt_en.pdf

⁴⁰² <https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr19-20/english/panels/ws/papers/ws20200309cb2-652-4-e.pdf>

- **[April 2020]** In addition to utility, rent and transport subsidies, an extra payment of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme standard rate has been given to several allowances, including the Old Age Allowance, the Old Age Living Allowance, and the Disability Allowance.⁴⁰³
- **[26 March 2020]** The maximum level of support under the Support Programme for Employees with Disabilities (SPED) has been raised to \$40,000. SPED was launched in 2013 to provide employers with a one-off subsidy for each employee with a disability.⁴⁰⁴
- **[10 May 2020]** Measures have been under discussion to encourage social enterprises to hire persons with disabilities through time-limited positions.⁴⁰⁵
- **[10 May 2020]** Non-governmental organizations have been encouraged to set up more small businesses and create more job opportunities for people with disabilities.⁴⁰⁶
- **[10 May 2020]** On-the-job training allowance has been increased, benefitting both persons with disabilities and their employers.⁴⁰⁷
- **[3 June 2020]** The Work Orientation and Placement Scheme (WOPS) has incentivized employers to employ and coach persons with disabilities through the provision of allowances. These allowances would be increased in the second half of 2020, raising the maximum amount from \$51,000 to \$60,000.⁴⁰⁸
- **[3 June 2020]** Two relief measures have been launched for enterprises subsidized by the Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise Project of the Social Welfare Department. The measures have involved the advanced payment of operating grant instalments and the provision of supplementary grants.⁴⁰⁹
- **[9 June 2020]** Recipients of social security benefits and the Individual-based Work Incentive Transport Subsidy (I-WITS) would receive an additional one-off allowance. This measure would benefit 150,000 recipients of the Disability Allowance.⁴¹⁰

Institutions and facilities

- **[n.d.]** Specific COVID-19 guidelines regarding residential care settings have been regularly reviewed and updated,⁴¹¹ including health advice to staff members.⁴¹²
- **[n.d.]** The Social Welfare Department has disseminated information on preventing the spread of COVID-19 to childcare centres and residential care homes for older persons and persons with disabilities.⁴¹³
- **[2 February 2020]** One-time special allowance assistance has been offered by the Social Welfare Department to 743 residential care homes for older persons and 323 residential care homes for persons with disabilities for the procurement of PPE and disinfectant supplies.⁴¹⁴
- **[4 May 2020]** A subsidy scheme has been approved to help 1,000 care homes for older persons and persons with disabilities to use anti-virus coating spray in their facilities.⁴¹⁵

⁴⁰³ <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/fund/CE-Measure-12-eng.pdf>

⁴⁰⁴ https://www.news.gov.hk/eng/2020/03/20200326/20200326_123952_011.html

⁴⁰⁵ https://www.lwb.gov.hk/tc/blog/post_10052020.html

⁴⁰⁶ https://www.lwb.gov.hk/tc/blog/post_10052020.html

⁴⁰⁷ https://www.lwb.gov.hk/tc/blog/post_10052020.html

⁴⁰⁸ <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/03/P2020060300293.htm>

⁴⁰⁹ <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202006/03/P2020060300293.htm>

⁴¹⁰ https://www.news.gov.hk/eng/2020/06/20200609/20200609_143426_835.html

⁴¹¹ https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/advice_to_rche_rchd_on_prevention_of_nid_eng.pdf

⁴¹² https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/advice_on_prevention_for_hostel_rche_rchd_eng.pdf

⁴¹³

https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/govt_preparedness_and_response_plan_for_novel_infectious_disease_of_public_health_significance_eng.pdf

⁴¹⁴ https://www.lwb.gov.hk/tc/blog/post_02022020.html

⁴¹⁵ https://www.news.gov.hk/eng/2020/05/20200504/20200504_151737_153.html

- **[19 May 2020]** The government has announced that it would enhance testing to include workers at elderly and disability homes.⁴¹⁶
- **[25 May 2020]** The government has introduced measures to increase mask supply, such as distributing one reusable CuMask to each citizen and ten disposable masks to each household, as well as providing masks for residential care homes for older persons and persons with disabilities.⁴¹⁷
- **[25 August 2020]** The Social Welfare Department has commissioned a testing laboratory to start the targeted testing of staff at residential care homes.⁴¹⁸
- **[January 2021]** Residents and staff of residential care homes for persons with disabilities have been identified as a priority group in the vaccine roll-out.⁴¹⁹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Official portal on COVID-19: <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html>

Disability focal point

- Labour and Welfare Bureau: <https://www.lwb.gov.hk/en>

Macao, China

Government responses

Continued access to goods and services

- **[2 February 2020]** All community and daytime social service facilities have suspended operations, but people with special needs could seek for necessary assistance from the facilities.⁴²⁰
- **[15 February 2020]** Essential services by the Social Welfare Bureau have been continued, including, among others, the application for the Disability Subsidy and the Disability Assessment Registration Card, individual and family counselling services, urgent intervention services, support services for users of residential facilities, and the inspection of social service facilities.⁴²¹

Accessible public information

- **[6 February 2020]** The Social Welfare Bureau has coordinated with the Teledifusão de Macau (TDM) and the Macao Voice Association to provide sign language interpretation services during the daily COVID-19 press conferences on the TDM channel.⁴²²

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- **[26 May 2020]** Four categories of people have been added to the Macao's nucleic acid testing scheme for COVID-19, including holders of the Macao Disability Assessment Card and the Macao Medical Assistance Card for Special Patients.⁴²³

⁴¹⁶ https://www.news.gov.hk/eng/2020/05/20200519/20200519_163638_526.html

⁴¹⁷ https://www.news.gov.hk/eng/2020/05/20200525/20200525_155118_587.html

⁴¹⁸ https://www.news.gov.hk/eng/2020/08/20200825/20200825_224623_139.html

⁴¹⁹ <https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/programme>

⁴²⁰ <https://www.gov.mo/en/news/122545/>

⁴²¹ <https://www.gov.mo/en/news/122877/>

⁴²² <https://www.gov.mo/en/news/122690/>

⁴²³ <https://www.gov.mo/en/news/125543/>

Social protection and employment support

- [13 February 2020] The payment of benefits would be continued via bank transfer, including disability pensions.⁴²⁴
- [13 February 2020] To receive pension payments, all old-age and disability pension beneficiaries must provide proof of life each year. The provision of proof of life was extended to the end of March 2020.⁴²⁵
- [10 July 2020] In March, the Social Welfare Bureau gave an extra payout to around 3,200 families regularly receiving financial support. In May, the Bureau also granted a special subsidy to single parents, those suffering from chronic illnesses and persons with disabilities.⁴²⁶
- [12 April 2021] The Macau government has begun issuing its annual revenue sharing payments early to persons with disabilities among other groups in order to alleviate the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴²⁷

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Centre for Disease Control and Prevention:
<https://www.ssm.gov.mo/apps1/PreventCOVID-19/en.aspx#clg17458>

Disability focal point

- Rehabilitation Service Division, Social Welfare Bureau: <https://www.ias.gov.mo>

New Caledonia

Government responses

Accessible public information

- [10 June 2020] The New Caledonia government website has posted COVID-19 information in various formats and languages.⁴²⁸

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website (in French): <https://gouv.nc/coronavirus>

Disability focal point

- Conseil du Handicap et de la Dépendance, Direction des Affaires Sanitaires et Sociales (In French): <https://dass.gouv.nc>

Niue

⁴²⁴ <https://www.gov.mo/en/news/122807/>

⁴²⁵ <https://www.gov.mo/en/news/122807/>

⁴²⁶ <https://www.macaupostdaily.com/article8732.html>

⁴²⁷ <https://www.casino.org/news/macau-begins-issuing-wealth-partaking-payments-early/>

⁴²⁸ <https://gouv.nc/info-coronavirus-covid-19/videos-affiches-et-depliants>

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [19 March 2020] The Niue Emergency Response Plan to Coronavirus Disease 2020 (COVID-19) includes a three-phase plan of readiness, response, and recovery, taking into account the needs of persons with disabilities.⁴²⁹

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Government website: <http://www.gov.nu/wb>

Disability focal point

- Department of Justice, Land Surveying and Community Services, Ministry of Social Services: <http://www.gov.nu/wb/pages/ministries.php>

Northern Mariana Islands (the)

Government responses

Mainstreaming of disability inclusion, participation, and partnerships

- [17 March 2020] The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation has closed as a precautionary measure against COVID-19 for two weeks, rescheduling all appointments in that period. The public notice has acknowledged concerns for the health and welfare of older persons and people with disabilities.⁴³⁰

Accessible public information

- [17 March 2020] The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation⁴³¹ has shared a COVID-19 resource by Green Mountain Self-advocates in plain language.⁴³²

Medical and quarantine policies and processes

- [30 March 2020] The Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) has been suspending visiting hours and caregivers' access to patients. The suspension has included caregivers for patients needing special assistance. Nurses would assist these patients instead.⁴³³

Social Protection and employment support

- [10 March 2021] The third round of COVID-19 stimulus payments would include payments for adult dependents with disabilities.⁴³⁴

Institutions and facilities

- [8 April 2020] The COVID-19 testing strategy has been announced. Priority 1 covers hospitalized patients and healthcare facility workers with symptoms. The four categories under Priority 2 include patients with symptoms in long-term care facilities.⁴³⁵

⁴²⁹ https://samoa.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/Niue%20Covid-19%20response%20plan%20v3_0.pdf

⁴³⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1080119322364708&set=a.347044765672171&type=3&theater>

⁴³¹ <https://www.ovrgov.net/225-covid-19-resources>

⁴³² <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1080119322364708&set=a.347044765672171&type=3&theater>

⁴³³ <https://chcc.gov.mp/DocumentFiles/CORRECTION%20CHCC-PR-20-072.pdf>

⁴³⁴ <https://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/financial-resilience-center/stimulus/>

⁴³⁵ <https://chcc.gov.mp/DocumentFiles/COVID-19%20Testing%20Update.pdf>

Useful links

Official website(s) on COVID-19

- Office of the Governor: <https://governor.gov.mp/covid-19>

Disability focal point

- Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of the Governor: <https://www.ovrgov.net>