



TOWN OF VERNON

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Town of Vernon Partners with State of Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities to Expand Access to COVID-19 Vaccine for People with Disabilities

(VERNON, Connecticut) – The Town of Vernon and the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities will work together to increase access to the COVID-19 vaccine for Connecticut residents with developmental disabilities.

People with disabilities can face unique challenges at mass vaccination clinics and other locations where vaccine is administered, said Walter Glomb, Director of the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities. “To reach this community, a more creative approach is needed.”

Key goals of the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities are to enable individuals who live with developmental disabilities to “live great lives in their own homes in their own communities” and to “to enter the workforce in meaningful, gratifying employment.” Central to achieving that is providing access to the COVID-19 vaccine to the people we serve, Glomb said.

Glomb contacted the Town of Vernon because of its success reaching deep into the community to vaccinate the hardest to reach people. “Breaking down barriers to reach people has been a hallmark of our nationally-recognized community vaccination program,” Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said. “Partnering with the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities fits right in to our mission.”

“We will provide a clinical operation that is custom tailored to serve this community efficiently and effectively,” Town Administrator and Emergency Management Director Michael Purcaro said. “And we can deploy immediately. Our trained and experienced team is ready to get to work providing life-saving vaccine.”

Vernon will partner with a variety of organizations to expand access to COVID-19 vaccine for people with disabilities, said Vernon Police Lt. William Meier, director of Vernon’s vaccination program.

“We plan to conduct clinics at strategic locations statewide with special accommodations to serve this community,” Meier said. Vernon will also develop a “tool kit” that will provide a blue print for vaccination clinics intended to accommodate individuals with disabilities, and best practices for clinics and outreach, now and in the future.

Among those partners is Opportunity Works Connecticut, Inc. of Vernon, which supports people with intellectual and physical disabilities to find employment in the community, and brings subject matter expertise to the effort to serve people living with disabilities.

“We bring a wealth of expertise, experience and knowledge of best practices for serving people with disabilities,” said Rene Lambert, Executive Director of Opportunity Works. “We look forward to working with the Town of Vernon in creating sensory appropriate clinics that will ensure the people we serve receive the best care possible.”

The Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities is one of several organizations that have received federal funding to increase access to COVID-19 vaccines for individuals with disabilities. The others are the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Disability Rights Connecticut, the Centers for Independent Living, and the Area Agencies on Aging.

For 50 years, the Council has served individuals with developmental disabilities and their families with advocacy, capacity building, systemic change activities that contribute to a comprehensive, coordinated, and self-determined system of individualized services and supports that is centered on and directed by individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. To learn more, please visit portal.ct.gov/CTCDD.

About the Town of Vernon

The Town of Vernon is a celebrated place to live, work and visit. From its beautiful parks and lakes, to its vast trails and historic homes and buildings, Vernon is a resilient and thriving community that promotes the health and wellbeing of its residents and values the natural environment. With a resident population of approximately 30,000 and occupying 18.03 square miles, Vernon combines a balanced appreciation of history, and a strong economic base for growth, both residential and commercial. Located 15 minutes east of the Connecticut capital of Hartford, and 25 miles from the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, the Town of Vernon is strategically located in “New England’s Knowledge Corridor” with close proximity to some of the top colleges and universities in the country.

Designated as a certified Sustainable Community, the Town of Vernon offers a wide range of benefits and services to its residents. The Town of Vernon is a full-service municipality that practices a management philosophy of continuous quality improvement. To learn more about the Town of Vernon, please call (860) 870-3670 or visit www.vernon-ct.gov.

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