

Meeting: Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Disability Access & Functional Needs (DAFN) Workgroup

February 10, 2023, 4:30 – 6:00 PM

Please note, these notes were generated using a meeting transcript and AI with review and editing by the workgroup support team.

Agenda Overview

1. Welcome and introductions
 2. Legislative and budget updates and implications for DAFN work
 3. Guidance Document
 4. Highlighting Stories from the DAFN Community
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Homework and Action Steps

Pick One Story

Each member is asked to think about “the first story” they would want to tell. Include:

- What is the story?
- Who is the audience?
- What do we want them to learn or do afterward?
- Which platform or format might work best?

[Review the Draft Guidance Document](#)

Please provide edits or comments to refine structure, ensure accessibility, and add missing content.

Key Discussion Points

Welcomes and Introductions

Francesco Somaini (he/him), the new Language Access and Accessibility Supervisor, introduced himself and shared his background in journalism, media studies, and higher education. He looks forward to supporting equitable access work at DOH.

The team noted that Tara remains on staff; Francesco was hired in addition to Tara’s role.

Legislative and Budget Updates

- **Liz and Todd** explained that the legislative session is ongoing and budgets remain uncertain until closer to session's end (likely late April). DOH and community members will continue monitoring developments.
- **Alyssa** summarized a communication from Governor Ferguson (referencing civil rights protections through the Attorney General's office).
- Members discussed ways to stay informed about legislative changes affecting disability access and to share summaries or trackers of relevant bills.
- Members briefly discussed a lawsuit involving several states challenging aspects of Section 504 of the Rehab Act, underscoring concerns about potential erosion of disability rights.
- Emphasis on the need for robust community advocacy, policy protection, and recognition of ASL and other communication modes as fundamental rights.

Draft Guidance Document

- Nilofer shared a [draft "guidance" document](#) designed to capture best practices for accessible engagement (e.g., meeting platforms, surveys, ASL, screen-reader compatibility).
- The draft is open in a shared Google Drive for collaborative feedback. **All members** are encouraged to add comments, edits, and questions directly in the document.
- The group wants to ensure the document does not "reinvent the wheel"; rather, it should consolidate and build upon existing best practices.

Action Item: Members will review the guidance draft, provide comments in Google Docs, and suggest any missing accessibility considerations.

Creating Space to Share Stories

Purpose of Storytelling:

- Members want to share personal experiences to illustrate why accessibility matters and how people with disabilities or access and functional needs (DAFN) navigate barriers.
- The goal is to encourage empathy, shift perceptions, and prompt better policies and practices.

Formats & Platforms:

Ideas included:

- Short videos (e.g., TikTok) to reach audiences with quick, impactful stories.
- Podcasts for more in-depth, conversational storytelling.
- Written and visual "profiles" on a website to highlight individual stories, tips, and resources.
- Ensuring any content is available in multiple formats (video with ASL, captions, transcripts, etc.) so it is accessible to diverse audiences.
- Some members are already creating content (e.g., TikTok demos, personal stories). The group could share or link to existing stories as part of a broader library.

Members emphasized that "one size never fits all," so having multiple media types is ideal. Francesco stressed clarifying who we want to reach and what we want them to learn or do. This can help choose the right platform.

Next Steps:

- DOH Partnership: Liz and Alyssa are exploring whether DOH staff can assist with recording or editing videos/podcasts. Resource limitations exist, but DOH is open to collaboration.
- Nilofer will follow-up with the group to get input that will help us make choices at our next meeting of first stories to prioritize. Future Meetings
- **Next Meeting:** March 17, 4:30–6:00 PM.
- The group will review any budget updates and discuss first draft(s) of sections from the DAFN Engagement Guidance Document.
- [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

<https://kauffmaninc.zoom.us/j/92244779159>

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