**MEMORANDUM**

TO:Municipal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinators

 Chair, Commission on Disabilities

FROM:Mary Mahon-McCauley, Executive Director, MOD

RE:COVID-19 ADA MUNICIPAL REMINDER

DATE:May 13, 2020

Good Morning,

The purpose of this correspondence is to assist Municipal ADA Coordinators in ensuring that **even in a crisis, people with disabilities should continue to have equal access to services, work, education, and community without discrimination or increased safety risks due to COVID-19.**

Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) is a state agency that provides information and technical guidance on disability rights and matters concerning equal access and opportunity.

As municipalities develop and implement programming to inform and support residents during this crisis, please consider the unique needs of residents with disabilities and the potential barriers that could prevent them from equally accessing these services as well as steps that must be taken to ensure that reasonable accommodation and effective communication are consistently considered in program planning.

When dispensing information to residents about COVID-19 and related programs, consider the potential ways that people with sensory, learning, and cognitive disabilities will access this information and take steps to ensure that communication methods are effective. If point of distribution locations for food or personal protective equipment are established, please address how these supplies will be distributed to people whose ability to drive, lift, carry or whose use of public transportation is limited, to ensure that people with disabilities can equally access those services.

MOD is aware that municipalities are typically mindful of carrying out their Title II obligations.  This notice is simply a reminder to continue these practices as new emergency programs are developed and implemented.

We recognize that the environment regarding COVID-19 is changing rapidly which in turn can change services and programs. Please continue to seek out information from the Massachusetts Office On Disability. As always, we are here to help and would like to encourage you to contact us with questions. I would like to end this correspondence by offering my sincere thanks to all of you for the work you do each and every day to help all of the residents in Massachusetts remain safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Mary Mahon McCauley

**Executive Director**