

Flatten Inaccessibility
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The Flatten Inaccessibility survey was open April 3 to 13, 2020. The purpose of the study was to learn about how the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting the life adults with visual impairments in the United States.

There were 15 original organizations and companies that collaborated in the study, including the National Federation of the Blind. We had 1,921 surveys for data analysis.

Five overview survey finding documents are available at <https://flatteninaccessibility.com/results.html>. These provide basic information about the study participants and their concerns.

In late July/early August a report will be posted both on the above web site and at <https://www.afb.org/research-and-initiatives/flatten-inaccessibility-survey>. You can sign up to be notified the report is available on this page.

Participants had concerns related to accessing COVID-19 testing, use of transportation and maintaining safety, accessing medications and supplies, and not having someone with them at the hospital. There were participants who were not getting to maintain their eye care or other healthcare and this was concerning.

The participants were well versed in technology with 99% having a smartphone. Though participants did report that there were issues with accessibility of apps and websites, they were using these tools to maximize their independence. They used technology to order groceries, connect with loved ones, and take part in exercise classes for example.

If you participated in the study, thank you! We hope to secure funding to do follow-up work on how COVID-19 is impacting those with visual impairments. This is an important time in the lives of those with vision loss and we have much to learn that can impact the lives of those with visual impairments for decades to come.