# National Federation of the Blind Guide for Affiliates Regarding COVID-19 Response

The following are suggested steps affiliates of the National Federation of the Blind can take in order to help blind people in their states and territories during the COVID-19 crisis.

## Suggested Actions

1. Each affiliate president should act as, or designate, a point of contact for responding to COVID-19-related inquiries and needs. If the affiliate president designates someone to handle this responsibility, then President Riccobono should be informed of who the point of contact is. He can be reached at 410-659-9314, extension 2369, or by email at officeofthepresident@nfb.org.
2. The COVID-19 point of contact for each affiliate should maintain communication with the national President and/or his designees to identify needs and coordinate responses. Designated individuals should continue to coordinate with their affiliate president.
3. Compile a document listing services, resources, and other information. This should be posted to the affiliate’s website if possible and distributed by every available communication channel, including email listservs, social media, etc. National-level resources are available at nfb.org/resources/covid-19-resources.
4. Post applicable information about local programs to assist people with COVID-19-related needs to the local channel of NFB-NEWSLINE®, where available, and arrangements should be made to contact people who don’t use the internet or email by telephone to check on them and share information.
5. Host virtual meetings. Each affiliate is entitled to a Zoom Pro account funded by the national organization during this emergency. Affiliates can take advantage of this to hold virtual meetings, seminars, and conference calls to maintain communication and assist blind people across their states or territories. Contact President Riccobono if your affiliate wishes to take advantage of Zoom.
6. Consider establishing a clear phone number and/or email address to receive inquiries and requests for assistance from blind people. Such a telephone number can easily be set up through Google Voice, and a Gmail account is also easy to set up. Branded Federation email addresses are always preferred.
7. Share information, including days and times, about any special COVID-19-related events or virtual Federation events by emailing [communicationsteam@nfb.org](mailto:communicationsteam@nfb.org) for national promotion. Suggestions for resources to be posted to the [Federation’s COVID-19 webpage](mailto:Federation's%20COVID-19%20webpage) should also be sent to [communicationsteam@nfb.org](mailto:communicationsteam@nfb.org).
8. Reach out to state agencies and other entities or groups that may have drivers available to assist blind people in getting tested at drive-through sites, going to the store, or with other transportation, or pickup or delivery needs.
9. Distribute information about Federation activities and the needs of blind people to local and state political leaders, municipal agencies, local media, and members of Congress serving your state or territory. This includes continuing to advocate for legislative priorities, including the Access Technology Affordability Act, financial assistance for Randolph-Sheppard vendors, opposition to IDEA waivers, etc.
10. Track and share information across the Federation regarding any problems that blind students are experiencing at colleges and universities including coordinating with the national office staff to assist with such problems. If a problem is technology-related, encourage the student and/or parent to complete the [education technology survey](https://www.nfb.org/programs-services/legal-program/education-technology-survey).

Thank you for your great work to continue building our organization.