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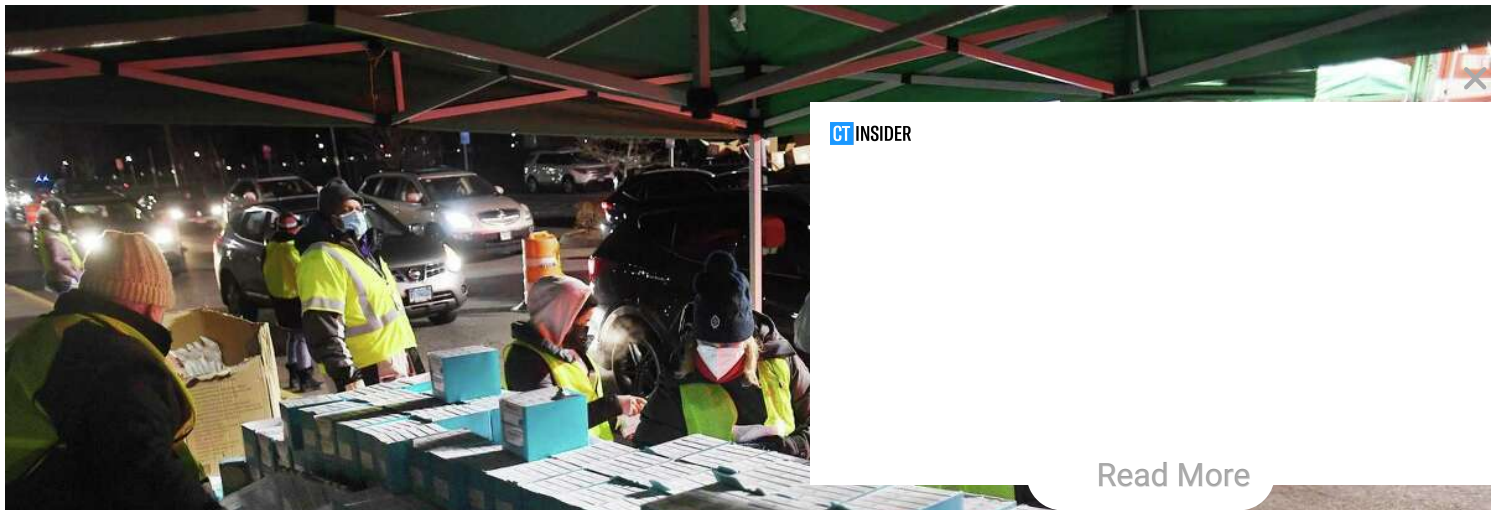
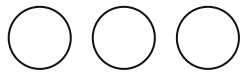
NEWS

# Groups file federal discrimination complaints over CT test, mask distribution



Liz Hardaway

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Disability advocacy organizations filed federal complaints Thursday stating the governor and state are not prioritizing those most at risk for COVID test and mask distributions.

Brian A. Pounds / Hearst Connecticut Media

Two Connecticut disability advocacy groups filed federal complaints against the state Thursday alleging violations of anti-discrimination laws regarding how at-home COVID tests and mask were distributed.



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The complaints were filed by [Disability Rights](#) advocacy system for people with disabilities, and a nonprofit law firm representing people with

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These groups said that Gov. Ned Lamont, the state of Connecticut and its Department of Public Health have violated federal anti-discrimination laws by not requiring towns and cities to prioritize giving COVID test kits and masks to people who are at higher risk due to health or living in congregate settings.

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“The situation is urgent – it should not wait one day longer,” said Deborah Dorfman, executive director of disability Rights CT, in a statement. “DRCT’s clients and constituents with disabilities must be imr ✕

to N95-masks and test kits and other COVID CT INSIDER  
 receive reasonable modifications. Each day th  
 needlessly exacerbates the risk that they will l  
 and serves only to perpetuate disability discri:

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The complaints said Lamont has suggested prioritizing high risk individuals rather than requiring it, leading to 45 municipalities distributing test kits on a first-come, first-serve basis.

“There is a high risk that individuals with disabilities will not have access to them [test kits and masks] and thereby be discriminated against because of their disabilities,” the complaints said.

The state hastily procured hundreds of thousands of at-home COVID-19 tests within the last week, distributing them to towns and cities. It was up to leaders in those towns to create independent plans to give the tests to residents. Along with the tests, Connecticut also provided towns with millions of N95 masks, distributed in a similar fashion.

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The groups filed the complaints Thursday with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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Disability Rights CT and the CLRP are asking the agencies to require the state to require municipalities to prioritize test and mask distribution to people at high risk of exposure or severe disease, as well as people in state custody or in state-funded congregate settings.

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Liz graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University in 2018 with a B.A. in journalism. She enjoys cooking, reading and playing with her dachshund, Finn.

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