

COVID-19 General Information

The most recent information regarding the Coronavirus Pandemic provided by the CDC states:

The CDC is responding to a pandemic of respiratory disease spreading from person-to-person caused by a new coronavirus. The disease has been named “coronavirus disease 2019” (abbreviated COVID-19). This situation poses a serious public health risk. COVID-19 can cause mild to severe illness.

COVID-19 symptoms may appear 2 – 14 days after exposure and have been described by the CDC as, but not limited to:

- Fever
- Shortness of breath
- Dry cough or other signs of respiratory infection such as a sore throat

Disease Control (CDC), ODP providers have noted that for individuals with ID/A COVID-19 infection has caused:

- muscle aches, weakness or a change in baseline
- behavior changes without or prior to respiratory symptoms emerging.

Providers should: closely observe individuals for weakness or other changes in behavior that may be indicative of illness.

Severe symptoms described by CDC as requiring immediate medical attention include but are not limited to:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips

Prior to beginning services again, Individual Support Plan (ISP) teams are to use the ODP Individual Transition Guide in conjunction with the probe guidance in the annotated ISP to assess risk associated with COVID-19 and determine for each individual who resides in a county which services and/or community activities may be resumed or started and what supports the individual must receive in order to be able to safely resume activities or engage in new activities. Individual ISP Team meetings are to be held prior to services beginning and provider agencies are not to open for services until they can meet all the requirements outlined by ODP and the PA Department of Health.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS ABOUT PRECAUTIONS: WHAT PRECAUTIONS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED RELATED TO STAFF, CONTRACTORS OR CONSULTANTS?

Our goal is to help staff members engage in healthy practices and reduce the opportunity for any exposure to individuals or staff members. While there is no 100% guarantee the virus can be eliminated, there are steps that can be taken to reduce risk. Screening processes outlined by the Office of Developmental Programs and PA Department of Health will be implemented for all day services.

This includes:

Providing training for staff on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19

Staff will be asked to assure that, if they are exhibiting any of the symptoms, they stay home and do NOT report for work; and call their physician for further instructions.

Proper handwashing and frequency of handwashing will be trained and implemented

All staff members will be asked a series of recommended questions (Reference: ODP, PA DOH, CDC) related to their own health status and contact with other persons over the last 14 days including: persons being tested for COVID-19, contact with persons who have a positive diagnosis of COVID-19, or contact with a person who has a physician-diagnosed presumed positive diagnosis of COVID-19. A potential exposure means a household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of a person with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 for at least 10 minutes. The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of time of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic.

All staff members will be required to take their temperature when they arrive for work; if a fever is detected they will be sent home with guidelines to contact their physician.

Staff members will be asked: do you have symptoms such as new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat and questions related to travel outside of the county.

All staff will be asked to wear masks during the time they are providing services. If there would be a specific issue related to breathing trouble or other medical conditions that may worsen by wearing a mask, an interactive process will be completed with the employee and health care practitioners will be contacted.

Cleaning of the facility and vehicles will be implemented by staff at different times during service periods.

QUESTIONS ON PRECAUTIONS: WHAT PRECAUTIONS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED RELATED TO INDIVIDUALS IN SERVICE? We understand that some individuals may not be ready to return to services,

some may have unique risk factors that preclude their immediate start, and still others may need special assistance and training to help them understand the changes needed due to COVID-19.

All individuals will have a similar screening and education processes as described for staff members.

Since individuals may not be able to understand all aspects of the current situation, there will be repeated training to emphasize the importance of adhering to the health guidelines.

All individuals will be asked to wear a mask while with other people. The ODP Transition Guide and ISP Team review that is to be completed should be utilized to determine what modifications can be made or what support is needed so that the transition to wearing a mask can be made.

All individuals will have their temperatures taken on arrival for services and follow the same process as outlined above for staff members. If a fever or symptom is detected, their caregiver or family will be contacted and the individual will be sent home. We ask that the caregiver or family contact a physician and review the specific situation; the individual will not be able to access services until the full process of evaluation and, where needed, recovery is complete.

If any person becomes ill during the day, they are to be picked up by the caregiver within 60-90 minutes of the alert and taken home by the caregiver. This is necessary both to assure the correct support for the individual who is ill and also to help contain any possible spread of an illness to others at the service site.