

The New Jersey Department of Human Services **Division of Developmental Disabilities**



DDD QUARTERLY UPDATE FOR INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES AND PROVIDERS

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Assistant Commissioner

March 18, 2020



Quarterly Update Agenda

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Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)



COVID-19 UPDATE 3/16/2020

GOVERNOR MURPHY'S EXECUTIVE ORDER #104:

- All gatherings of persons in the State of New Jersey shall be limited to 50 persons or fewer, with limited exceptions;
- All public, private, and parochial preschool programs, and elementary and secondary schools, including charter and renaissance schools, will be closed beginning on Wednesday, March 18, 2020, and remain closed as long as the Order remains in effect;
- Institutions of higher education will cease all in-person instruction beginning on Wednesday, March 18, 2020, and shall cease such in-person instruction as long as the Order remains in effect;
- The Commissioner of Education shall continue working with each public, private, and parochial school to ensure students are able to continue their education through appropriate home instruction
- The Secretary of Agriculture and the Commissioner of Education shall take all necessary actions to ensure all students eligible for free or reduced meals will continue to receive the services necessary to meet nutritional needs during closures;
- All casinos, concert venues, nightclubs, racetracks, gyms, fitness centers and classes, movie theaters, and performing arts centers will be closed to the public beginning on Monday, March 16, 2020 at 8:00 p.m. and remain closed as long as this Order remains in effect;
- All other non-essential retail, recreational, and entertainment businesses must cease daily operations from 8:00 p.m. until 5:00 a.m.; and
- All restaurant establishments, with or without a liquor or limited brewery license, are limited to offering delivery and/or take out-services only.



What is My COVID-19 Risk Level? For the Public

This chart helps people determine actions to take based on their health status and exposure. People with mild illness do not necessarily need to be tested for COVID-19. Contact your health care provider for more information based on your personal health history.

My Health Status	Actions to Take	Risk Level
I am not sick and have no symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing	Wash hands frequently, practice social distancing and stay away from sick people.	Low
I am not sick and have no symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing, but I have underlying health issues OR I am an older adult (ages 60-65 and older)	Wash hands frequently, practice social distancing and stay away from sick people and avoid crowds. If you begin to experience symptoms such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing, contact a health care provider.	Low
I am not sick and have no symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing, but I was a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case	Stay home for 14 days and self-monitor yourself for symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing. If symptoms appear, contact your health care provider.	Low
I am not sick and have no symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing, but I am a household/close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case	Stay home for 14 days and self-monitor yourself for symptoms of fever, cough or shortness for 14 days. If symptoms appear, contact a health care provider. Wash hands frequently and do not go to work, school, or public gatherings while self-isolating.	Low
I am sick with symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing	Stay home for at least 7 days after your fever is gone and your symptoms have significantly improved; self-isolate yourself and take your temperature 2 times/day. Contact your health care provider if your symptoms get worse. Depending on your health history and symptoms, your health care provider may recommend COVID-19 testing. Wash hands frequently, do not go to work, school or public gatherings while self-isolating. If you go to a medical facility, wear a face mask.	Medium
I live with a person who is a confirmed COVID-19 case and I am currently experiencing symptoms OR I am experiencing symptoms and have a travel history from an area with high rates of COVID-19 cases	Self-isolate at home. Stay in a separate bedroom and use a separate bathroom (if possible). Contact your local health department with your temperature 2 times/day. Contact your health care provider if your symptoms get worse. Depending on your health history and symptoms, your health care provider may recommend COVID-19 testing. Wash hands frequently, do not go to work, school or public gatherings while self-isolating. If you go to a medical facility, wear a face mask. Travel only to go to a medical facility.	High
NOTE: Household contacts are individuals who live in the same home as the confirmed COVID-19 case. Close contacts are individuals who were within 6 feet of a confirmed COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time (approximately 10 minutes or more) or had direct contact with the infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., were coughed on). Walking past a confirmed COVID-19 case does NOT qualify as being a close contact.		

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DIVISION AND LICENSING OPERATIONS



Division and Licensing Operations

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- Effective March 18, 2020, all state agencies have temporarily shifted to remote work wherever possible to prevent people from congregating.
- The Division has/is providing remote access capability to State staff.
- This is **not** a State shutdown. Government is open. All critical functions will continue to be performed.
- All licensing and program guidelines remain in effect.

Division and Licensing Operations

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- For assistance during this time:
 - For vital issues, call the Division Community Services office for your county or 1.800.832.9173.
 - When calling, you will be connected with the Division's answering service who will take information about the circumstance and have a Division staff person reach out to you.
- For routine questions please email DDD.FeeForService@dhs.nj.gov
- For COVID-19 related questions please email DDD.COVID-19@dhs.nj.gov.
- To report suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation, call 1.800.832.9173 then press 1.



Division and Licensing Operations

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Division Community Services Offices

PATERSON OFFICE: Bergen, Hudson, Passaic	973.977.4004
FLANDERS OFFICE: Morris, Sussex, Warren	973.927.2600
NEWARK OFFICE: Essex	973.693.5080
PLAINFIELD OFFICE: Union, Somerset	908.226.7800

TRENTON OFFICE: Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex	800.832.9173
FREEHOLD OFFICE: Ocean, Monmouth	732.863.4500
VOORHEES OFFICE: Burlington, Camden, Gloucester	856.770.5900
MAYS LANDING OFFICE: Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, Salem	609.476.5200

Division and Licensing Operations

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- Investigations of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation will continue unchanged.
- Incident reporting will continue unchanged.
 - All suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in staff or individuals **must be reported to the Division.**
 - Staff shortages must still be reported.
 - ✦ This includes the inability of a Support Coordination Agency to perform required functions or if any other health and safety needs cannot be met.

Division and Licensing Operations

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- Failure to meet guidance for hygiene, cleaning/disinfecting, sanitation and other aspects of individual safety will result in both immediate and prospective negative licensing action.
- **Routine** licensing visits are temporarily suspended.
- DHS staff will continue to perform incident verification and site visits, per Komninos' Law.
- Provider staff must continue to call 911 in a life-threatening emergency, per Danielle's Law.

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OPERATIONAL CHANGES



Operational Changes

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- Effective March 13, 2020
 - Until further notice, suspension of face-to-face contacts by support coordination and Division staff unless related to the health and safety of individual or required by State law.
 - ✦ Quarterly and annual contacts to occur by phone or electronically.
 - Until further notice, suspension of provider-facilitated community outings not related to health and safety.
- Effective March 17, 2020
 - Until further notice, closure of facility-based day service settings.

Operational Changes

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- A facility-based day service setting is any **non-residential congregate setting**.
 - It does not matter what services are being delivered in the setting (Day Habilitation, Career Planning, Prevocational Training, etc.).
 - The focus is stopping groups of individuals from congregating.
 - Programs will remain closed until directed by the Division to re-open, which will occur after federal and state authorities advise it is safe for people to congregate.

Operational Changes

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- Residential providers can continue to plan home and community activities for individuals who live together, much as other households are doing during this time, within the following parameters:
 - Providers cannot transport or gather multiple individuals from multiple residences to a single location for shared services.
 - Activities should be tailored to the interests of individuals and based on their health and safety needs.
 - Activities must be consistent with the most up-to-date guidance of public health authorities, including all restrictions and limitations.

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ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WHO LIVE AT HOME AND THEIR FAMILIES



Assisting Individuals who Live at Home and Their Families

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- Flexibility with hiring self-directed employees (SDEs):
 - Temporary lift to allow self-directed employees (SDEs) to work more than 40 hours per week for an employer in the DDD SDE Option and receive overtime pay, as long as the additional hours are needed and the individual's budget can support it.
 - Temporary lift to allow parent, spouse or guardian to become an SDE.
 - ✦ Please note that a parent, spouse or guardian enrolled with PPL as the employer of record is not able to enroll or be paid as an SDE at this time.

Hiring a Self-Directed Employee

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Individual Does Not Have any SDEs	Individual Has an SDE Through PPL	Individual Has an SDE Through Easterseals Old Model
Support Coordinator submits Individual Referral to PPL.	Individual/Family talks to SC about adding an SDE, then calls PPL to request to hire a new SDE.	Individual/Family talks to SC about adding an SDE, then calls Easterseals to request to hire a new SDE.
Enrollments of both employer of record and employee will need to be completed.	PPL will send an Employee Enrollment Packet to SDE, which must be completed and submitted to PPL.	Easterseals will send an Employee Enrollment Packet to SDE, which must be completed and submitted to Easterseals.
PPL will outreach individual/family to initiate enrollments.	A person enrolled as the employer of record cannot also enroll as an SDE.	

Hiring a Self-Directed Employee

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- After the fiscal intermediary (FI) receives a new SDE enrollment packet, the FI will:
 - ✦ Process the enrollment paperwork;
 - ✦ Check the Central Registry of Offenders; and
 - ✦ Email DHS Employee Controls and Compliance Unit (ECCU) for a background check clearance:
 - If DHS confirms the SDE has previously cleared federal and state background checks, the SDE can be on-boarded;
 - Fingerprinting of new SDE still needs to be scheduled immediately; drug testing and CARI Form still need to be completed **as soon as possible** and within 120 days.
 - ✦ FI emails billable rate to SC to create service.

Billing SDE Hours Though PPL

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- SDEs need to continue to document the delivery of services, including any hours worked over 40 per week and any hours worked that are not yet prior authorized in the plan.
- SDEs who work over 40 hours per week or hours that are not yet prior authorized in the plan must **track and submit those hours on a separate timesheet.**
- Information will be provided as soon as possible in relation to payment for these hours.

Interaction with Support Coordination

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- In coordination with the individual/guardian, service plans should be revised as soon as possible by support coordinators and **no later than May 1** to reflect new or adjusted services.
- Until further notice, verbal or email authorizations from public or private guardians can be accepted for plan approval.
 - Support Coordinators must indicate on plan signature page:
Due to COVID-19 precautions, [verbal or email] permission from [guardian name] was provided to me on [date] to move forward with plan approval.

Online/Remote Learning

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- Goods & Services

- The Division will temporarily allow Goods and Services classes usually delivered in-person to be delivered online/remotely as long as:
 - ✦ Online/remote learning is appropriate for the individual being served; and
 - ✦ The individual agrees to participate and participates in online/remote learning.
- Please work with your Support Coordinator to add the service to the plan and obtain approval, as usual.
- Please note that this accommodation is not available for other waiver services at this time.



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SUPPORTING DAY AND RESIDENTIAL PROVIDERS



Supporting Day and Residential Providers

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- **Financial support – Day Services**
 - Day providers will be paid for two weeks as if they were open and providing services.
 - The state is working closely with federal partners to identify longer term funding commitments.
 - To be eligible for this payment, a provider must hold a current day habilitation certification.
 - The payment will be based on one month of FFS and contract payments, prorated for two weeks.
 - **Although providers may have open authorizations for these services during this period, *Day Habilitation services should not be claimed.***

Supporting Day and Residential Providers

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- Financial support – **Day Services, Continued**
 - Payments will be issued by the Division via check or direct deposit based on provider's preferred method of payment, as indicated in NJStart.
 - Payments will be issued by the end of March.
 - To receive payment, impacted day providers will need to be registered in NJStart.
 - To register for NJStart: <https://www.njstart.gov/bsa/>
 - Information about financial support beyond this two-week period will be provided as soon as possible.

Supporting Day and Residential Providers

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- Financial support – **Residential Services**
 - The Division is providing two weeks of funding for increased staffing needs during the day.
 - The state is working closely with federal partners to identify longer term funding commitments.
 - To be eligible for this payment, a provider must be billing the Individual Supports daily rate.
 - The payment will be 20% of one month of FFS and contract payments to adjust for increased staffing.

Supporting Day and Residential Providers

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- Financial support – **Residential Services, Continued**
 - Residential providers should continue claiming for Individual Supports daily rate for individuals who remain in the residence.
 - Providers should be able to demonstrate that they have arranged for additional staffing during the hours when day programs are closed and are meeting all licensing and program requirements.

Supporting Day and Residential Providers

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- Financial support – **Residential Services, Continued**
 - Payments will be issued by the Division via check or direct deposit based on providers preferred method of payment, as indicated in NJStart.
 - Payments will be made by the end of March.
 - To receive payment, impacted residential providers will need to be registered in NJStart.
 - To register for NJStart: <https://www.njstart.gov/bso/>
 - Information about financial support beyond this two-week period will be provided as soon as possible.

Supporting Day and Residential Providers

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- Flexibility related to hiring:
 - On-boarding can begin after cleared through Central Registry check;
 - Allowance to work if cleared federal and state background checks are present;
 - Pre-Employment Drug Testing to be completed as soon as possible and **within 120 days of hire**;
 - Child Abuse Registry Information to be completed as soon as possible and **within 120 days of hire**;
 - Outline provided of trainings required before first shift;
 - Evidence of physical within one year, and previous TB testing.

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GENERAL INFORMATION



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- Is there a way to obtain hand sanitizer, personal protective equipment (PPE), or similar supplies?
 - At this time, these items are only available through the normal retail channels.
 - The Division will advise if federal, state or local partners are able to make them available in the future.
 - PPE should be used when directed by a health care professional.
 - Please be aware that use of PPE without proper training can increase the risk of infection and transmission.

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- Should I visit my family member who resides in a group home, supervised apartment or other group setting?
 - Face-to-face visits in group settings are discouraged, as a visitor may be infected and not realize it.
 - Face-to-face visits may place the individual, their housemates and the direct support professionals who have the responsibility to care for them at risk.
 - Friends and family members of individuals are encouraged to work with the residential agency on remote visits (Facetime, Skype, etc.), if at all possible.

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- Provider and direct support professional (DSP) travel for work.
 - Direct support professionals are essential front-line staff.
 - Provider and DSP travel for work is essential.
 - Non-essential travel remains discouraged between 8pm and 5am.

Questions about COVID-19

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- What if someone develops COVID-19 signs or symptoms?
 - Contact a health care professional if you, an employee, or an individual in your care develops signs or symptoms COVID-19.
 - Your healthcare provider will determine if they need to be seen and if they meet the criteria for certain tests, such as those for the flu, COVID-19 or other infections.
 - Please refer to your local public health authority for COVID-19 reporting requirements and recommendations for what to do if someone in a home or program is diagnosed:
<http://localhealth.nj.gov>.

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- The following COVID-19 symptoms may appear within 2 to 14 days after exposure (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID19-symptoms.pdf):
 - ✦ Fever
 - ✦ Cough
 - ✦ Shortness of Breath

Questions about COVID-19

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- How do I care for someone with COVID-19?
 - ✦ A health care professional will provide advice on the care of someone with COVID-19.
 - ✦ Identify a room or area of the household that can be used to separate someone who is sick. A health care professional may make this recommendation based on the person's diagnosis.
 - ✦ Follow the health care professional's direction regarding isolation of those who may be in close contact with the infected person.
 - ✦ Staff should follow all proper precautions when working with an individual in isolation.
 - ✦ Make sure you have a backup plan in place in case an individual's primary caregiver(s) or support staff are unable to provide care.

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- Will the Division be able to care for a sick individual if a family or provider cannot?
 - All suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in staff or individuals **must be reported to the Division.**
 - The Division is not able to offer medical care to sick individuals.
 - That said, if an individual is too sick to be cared for at home, or is required to quarantine and cannot do so in their current living arrangement, please contact the Division to see if we can be of assistance.

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- Wash hands thoroughly and often.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and then throw the tissue into a trashcan, and wash your hands.
- Review the CDC's guidance on what to do if you have a respiratory infection, like COVID-19 or the flu, or are in contact with an individual who does:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html

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- Receive the latest information

- ✦ Subscribe to DDD News by sending an email to DDD.Communications@dhs.nj.gov and include "Division Update Subscribe" in the subject line.
- ✦ NJ Department of Health COVID-19: www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml
 - 24-Hour Hotline: 1-800-222-1222
- ✦ Contact Information for all local health departments in NJ: <http://localhealth.nj.gov>
- ✦ U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: www.cdc.gov/COVID19
- ✦ Subscribe to the CDC's COVID-19 newsletter: <https://tools.cdc.gov/campaignproxyservice/subscriptions.aspx>



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- Webinar from March 9, 2020
 - <https://www.gotostage.com/channel/211b7cb644834745a4e4d38e3b4bad2f/recording/d90bb47f64274f3a99bbf7e7e66c006b/watch>
- Webinar Slides from March 9, 2020
 - <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/documents/COVID-19-update-for-individuals-families-providers.pdf>

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- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Guidance For New Jersey Community Providers of Services for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities:
 - www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/documents/COVID-19-guidance-for-community-providers.pdf
- COVID-19 Guidance for Individuals and Families of Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities:
 - www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddd/documents/COVID-19-guidance-for-individuals-and-families.pdf