



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Peter Mason
Deputy Commissioner

To: DDS Providers

From: Jordan A. Scheff, Commissioner

Cc: Peter Mason, Deputy Commissioner; Katie Rock-Burns, Chief of Staff; David David, Director of Service Development and Support; Valencia Bagby-Young, Director of Health & Clinical Services

Date: March 27, 2020

RE: COVID-19 Guidance for Day and Employment Programs

In an effort to provide ongoing updates regarding statewide preparedness efforts for COVID-19, this memo is to communicate further guidance for all Department of Developmental Services' (DDS) qualified day providers. Based on new guidance from Governor Lamont and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) regarding social distancing and restrictions on gatherings, the department is issuing the following guidance for all DDS qualified providers effective, Monday, March 30, 2020:

Day and Employment Programs

Congregate Settings

- DDS is requiring that all congregate day and employment settings cease operation until further notice with the following exceptions **for individuals living in the family home or a CCH whose caregivers are considered essential staff ONLY** (e.g. healthcare workers, first responders):
 - Small group settings consisting of no more than five (5) DDS funded individuals and three (3) staff may be permitted.
 - There is to be no sharing of staff between groups.
 - Social distancing and hygiene guidelines should be followed whenever possible.
 - All facilities and transportation vehicles must be cleaned after each use.
 - All facilities and transportation vehicles must be deep cleaned at least once a week.
 - More than one small group setting, as defined above, may meet in the same building, as long as the individuals and staff are separated at all times (e.g. on separate floors, on separate sides of the building), AND do not use the same entrances and exits, hallways, bathrooms, cooking facilities, or transportation vehicles.
 - ***Providers must receive prior approval from the region before a small group setting may begin to meet.***

Group Day and Individual Supported Employment (ISE) supports

- DDS is allowing individual and group supported employment (ISE/GSE) settings to continue for those community employment sites that are considered essential or those settings in which the individuals would be risking their jobs if they did not report to work. The following guidance is given for the GSE groupings:
 - GSE should consist of no more than five (5) individuals and three (3) staff per group.
 - More than GSE, as defined above, may meet in the same building, as long as the individuals and staff are separated at all times (e.g. on separate floors, on separate sides of the building), AND do not use the same entrances and exits, hallways, bathrooms, cooking facilities, or transportation vehicles.
 - There is to be no sharing of staff between groups.
 - Social distancing and hygiene guidelines should be followed whenever possible.
 - All transportation vehicles must be cleaned after each use.
 - All transportation vehicles must be deep cleaned at least once a week.
 - If a vehicle is to be used for individuals other than the assigned GSE group, the vehicle must be deep cleaned each time it is to be used by different staff and individuals.

Redeploying Staff

- Day providers are to utilize their staff whenever they can to provide in-home/alternate individualized supports to individuals who live in their own home or with a caregiver or a Community Companion Home (CCH) provider who provides essential services.
- Staff should continue to complete GSE contracts whenever individuals funded by the department are unable to work at the sites.
- Staff qualified under any of the three DDS Waiver service definitions may be used for the provision of any non-professional services under the definitions of another waiver service. Professional services exempt from this include: Clinical Behavioral Supports, Healthcare Coordination, Nursing, Dietician, Therapists, etc.
- All staff must receive training on any participant's individual plan for any individual they are supporting.
- Day program providers should redeploy their staff to provide supports and services in residential settings, as needed and as possible.
- DDS strongly encourages providers that only offer day services to contact other residential providers and develop cooperative arrangements to supply staff to support participants in residential service areas.

Billing Attendance

- Provider should continue to bill for the service they have been authorized to provide. All services should continue to document in accordance with the documentation guidelines.
- Attendance for the month of March and April will not be the basis for the May and June payments, but must still be reported.
- Per diems should be billed as a per diem no matter how many units of services have been provided. Hourly billing should be billed for each unit of support.
- Providers may bill for the per diem when, at a minimum, the provider makes contact with the individual during the day and performs a wellness check. Attached is a Wellness Check form to be used for each time the individual is contacted.

DDS will continue to provide any updates and information and guidance regarding COVID-19 with individuals, families and providers. To review all DDS communications please visit the DDS homepage at <https://portal.ct.gov/DDS> under "COVID-19 Updates for DDS Individuals and Families" and "COVID-19 Updates for DDS Providers". For questions please email DDS.COVID19@ct.gov.

Thank you.