



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 16, 2020

RE: COVID-19 Guidance- DDS Providers

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' qualified 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, tomorrow, March 17, 2020:

Day and Employment Programs

- DDS is requiring that any DDS congregate settings of 50 or more, staff and those supported combined, cease operation until further notice.

Further we encourage providers to be ready with a plan for how you will work in groups no larger than 5 people supported plus staff.

- For providers that assist individuals in competitive employment opportunities, we encourage you and the individual you support to discuss options with the employer directly.
- Day program providers may redeploy their staff to provide similar supports and services in residential settings directly.

DDS Dental Clinics

- DDS is requiring all DDS dental clinics to cancel all scheduled elective, routine, and non-urgent dental services until March 27, 2020.

DDS Case Management

- DDS case managers will continue to work with individuals and families to convene Individual Plans via tele-conference.
- Annual Individual Planning meetings and Level of Need assessments may be extended based on case manager evaluation.
- All quality service reviews, initial intake visits, and other service coordination visits will be suspended. However, tasks that require face-to-face visits to ensure health and safety will continue. These tasks include well-care visits and immediate protective service orders.

DDS understands these difficult decisions may drastically change the daily routine of the individuals we serve and compound the challenges you and your staff are already facing. All providers should continue to reference and follow their Continuous Operation Plan (COOP) and make decisions based on the health, safety and welfare needs of the individuals we support and your staff.

DDS also understands that continuing your operations is important to you, your staff and those you support. While DDS hopes to have more information regarding funding and fiscal related processes sometime tomorrow, we want to assure you that we are dedicated to exhausting all avenues for assistance. To that end, we are looking at state and federal solutions including our Appendix K of the waivers, reallocation of current appropriations, and all other means we can use to keep you stable, to keep you as a partner, to help you thrive now and through the end of this challenging situation.

For general information and statewide updates related to COVID-19 please visit:

<https://portal.ct.gov/coronavirus>

DDS urges all staff and individuals you support to take simple preventative measures to keep everyone healthy:

- Wash your hands thoroughly and often throughout the day. Use warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow. Viruses can spread by coughing or sneezing on other people or into your hands.

For questions regarding this memo or any COVID-19 related planning efforts please email

DDS.COVID19@ct.gov.

Please continue to reference the DDS COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document as updates are provided regularly. This document can be found through the DDS provider gateway under the section titled “[COVID-19](#)” or on the [DDS homepage](#), under “[COVID-19 Updates for DDS Providers](#)”.

As information on COVID-19 and decision making related to emergency preparations remains fluid, DDS will continue to communicate any statewide or agency specific updates as soon as they become available.

Thank you for your continued dedication during these challenging times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jordan A. Scheff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner
Department of Developmental Services