



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

Ned Lamont
Governor

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner

Peter Mason
Deputy Commissioner

March 12, 2020

Dear DDS Self-Directed Individuals and Families,

As a follow-up to Commissioner Scheff's letter yesterday to all DDS individuals and families regarding COVID-19 (also known as the coronavirus), we wanted to provide a separate communication with more information to DDS individuals and families that self-direct.

DDS continues to work with the administration, our sister state agencies, federal partners and our network of providers on all preparedness efforts.

It is important that all self-directed families have a backup plan and discuss this plan with your Planning and Support Team (PST).

- If you live independently - make sure you have a plan if for any reason your staff/direct support professionals are unable to provide services.
- For families – if you or one of your family members becomes ill, make sure you have a plan in place to support your family/personal needs.
- For family/individual with home health agency (HHA) support – talk to your HHA to make sure you know what plan is in place if you or your family member becomes ill.

Please understand that the intent of this communication is to provide guidance to help with your preparation for maintaining supports during an emergency within the funding authorized through the individual budgets. It is extremely important to have a back-up plan in place for the scenario described above that applies to you. Please be sure to keep your PST and broker aware of any requests or proposed changes to your plan.

DDS continues to urge everyone to take simple preventative measures to keep healthy:

- If you haven't already, get your flu shot and make sure the people around you do the same.
- Wash your hands thoroughly and often throughout the day. Use warm water and soap. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel. The CDC has a great fact sheet you can find on the DDS Advocates' Corner <https://www.ct.gov/advocatescorner/cwp/view.asp?a=3912&q=462018>
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow. Viruses can spread by coughing or sneezing on other people or into your hands.

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- Stay home from work or school if you are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious foods.
- Keep surfaces (especially bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, and toys for children) clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant.

If you experience any symptoms as noted with COVID-19 or have any medical concerns, please contact your primary care physician for guidance.

For general information, details on symptoms, prevention, treatment and statewide updates related to COVID-19 please visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/coronavirus>

DDS continues to work with the administration, our sister state agencies, federal partners and our network of providers on all preparedness effort and will continue to communicate any statewide and agency-based updates as they become available.

Thank you for your efforts to make sure we all stay healthy.

Sincerely,



Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner
Department of Developmental Services