



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
A Healthcare Service Agency

NED LAMONT
GOVERNOR

MIRIAM E. DELPHIN-RITTMON, Ph.D.
COMMISSIONER

MEMORANDUM

To: DMHAS Staff
From: Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D.
Date: May 29, 2020
Subject: DMHAS COVID-19 Staff Update #19

Connecticut continues to make progress in our fight against the coronavirus. The Governor's daily briefings are showing that hospitalizations and deaths are declining and the number of new cases of COVID-19 are decreasing as well. Sectors that were previously closed have begun to reopen. We are all playing a part in helping to contain the spread of the virus. I wanted to use today's memo to provide some important updates to staff. The updates are important as DMHAS expands our testing of staff and we begin planning for our re-opening.

COVID Leave Time for State Staff

Approximately 10 days ago, I informed staff that DMHAS was going to begin testing direct care staff at Connecticut Valley Hospital (CVH) and Whiting Forensic Hospital (WFH). Since that notification, almost 600 staff at both hospitals have voluntarily agreed to be tested. While our testing has only identified a few staff that were COVID positive, the testing has again raised questions about leave time. I wanted to share with staff that DAS modified their guidance as it relates to COVID leave. The following passage comes directly from their most recent guidance:

Effective May 20, 2020, this leave may be taken intermittently beyond the fourteen consecutive calendar day period previously set forth in this guidance, but only for those employees who have not taken paid leave equivalent to their regularly scheduled regular hours for a pay period. Those employees will be eligible to take any remaining leave intermittently, beginning May 20, 2020.

Employees who have taken an amount of paid leave equivalent to their regularly scheduled hours for a pay period have exhausted their benefit.

If staff have questions about the change, please contact your facility Human Resources Director to obtain clarification.

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Child Care Resources for Front Line Providers

As DMHAS and other state agencies continue to prepare for on-site work in facilities or departments where this was discontinued, staff are likely struggling with how to manage child care. I wanted to pass along a resource that we previously sent out related to Child Care for Front Line responders. The link below will provide information about a program that offers assistance to frontline workers for child care.

<https://www.ctoec.org/ctcares-for-frontline-workers/>

Staff should note that staff must complete the application process by June 15th.

I cannot say enough how much I appreciate all that our staff have done in very challenging times. Your contributions and willingness to deal with the uncertainty we have face has helped us to provide quality care. I remain extremely thankful for all you have done on behalf of our clients.