



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; Val Bagby-Young, Director of Health & Clinical Services

Date: March 11, 2020

RE: COVID-19 Guidance

Yesterday, March 10, 2020 Governor Lamont declared public health and civil preparedness emergencies in Connecticut.

These emergency declarations give the state the authority to provide necessary measures to prepare for and contain the outbreak of COVID- 19 (also known as the coronavirus) in Connecticut.

To this end, DDS is sharing the following guidance for all DDS qualified providers, effective the date of this memo:

Day and Employment Programs

- DDS is requiring that any DDS day or employment program congregating 100 or more people throughout a single day, in a single location, cease operation until further notice. This includes any period of time in which 100 or more people may congregate in a common area before dispersing (e.g. congregating in a lobby before small groups leave in separate vans). Providers may prioritize their services to support fewer than 100 people in a single day and may continue to operate.
- Providers of day and employment programs supporting fewer than 100 people in a single day, in a single location, may choose to cease operation until further notice.
- Residential providers should use their discretion when determining whether individuals should attend a day or employment program supporting fewer than 100 people (if the program is still running). Please make sure to consider the following when making this decision:

Phone: 860 418-6000 ♦ TDD 860 418-6079 ♦ Fax: 860 418-6001
460 Capitol Avenue ♦ Hartford, Connecticut 06106
www.ct.gov/dds ♦ e-mail: ddsct.co@ct.gov
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- Does the individual you support have a medical need that compromises their health, including any respiratory issues?
- Does the individual you support show any symptoms of the flu/cold or fever?
- Is the individual you support over the age of 60?

If the answer to any of the questions listed above is “yes,” DDS highly recommends keeping the individual home and contacting their team and primary health provider as soon as possible for further direction.

Licensing and Quality Visits

- DDS is suspending all National Core Indicator surveying until further notice.
- DDS is reviewing all licensing and quality visits to determine if alternative methods of review can be utilized. Guidance on future visits that are already scheduled will be communicated on a case by case basis.

Individual Plans and Level of Need Assessments

- DDS is reviewing alternatives to in-person gatherings for IP meetings and Level of Need assessments. Additional guidance on this topic will be forthcoming.

General Guidance

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.

If an individual you support develops respiratory or gastrointestinal viral symptoms please have them evaluated by the person’s primary care provider or another community health care provider as soon as possible.

We understand that these are extremely difficult decisions and can assure you they were not made lightly. The Department’s highest priority is keeping the individuals we support healthy and safe. We also recognize that these decisions may have fiscal implications for providers. We are continuing to review options as this situation evolves and will be in contact with any final guidance or decisions.

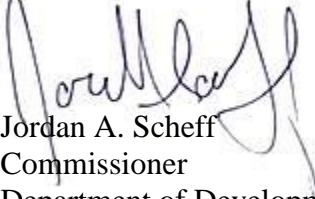
The department is and will continue to be in constant contact with the administration, our sister agencies and our federal partners on all preparedness efforts and potential outbreak management.

DDS has set up a general inbox for any qualified providers that may have questions regarding this memo or any COVID-19 related planning efforts. Please use the following email for such communications:

DDS.COVID19@ct.gov

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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jordan A. Scheff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

Jordan A. Scheff
Commissioner
Department of Developmental Services