



*Connecting Individuals with Disabilities to Their Community*

## **COVID-19 Preparedness and Impact Memo**

March 12, 2020

Dear Individuals, Guardians, Staff, and Contractors of Community Bridges Residential & Day Services,

In light of the active flu season and recent questions around the Coronavirus (COVID-19), we would like to share the following guidance and information on if and how Community Bridges Residential & Day Services may be impacted.

While the information thus far indicates that these illnesses are not dangerous to most of our population, it is still wise to prepare and take steps to avoid further spread. With consideration of the higher risk factors among some of the people we support, Community Bridges Residential & Day Services may implement special protective measures to promote continued health and quality supports. Please note that many of these preparedness and responses strategies are similar for flu, coronavirus, and other illnesses.

### **Prevention & Containment Strategies:** *Ways to avoid getting sick and spreading illness.*

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipes.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow, then throw tissue in the trash. Avoid coughing into your hands or the open air.
- Stay home when you are sick.

### **Preparedness Strategies:** *Steps to take in the event that community access is limited due to illness. This could be due to your own illness, illness of those close to you, or illness prevalent in general population.*

- Stay up to date with reliable new sources, such as the website of your local health department.  
(<https://www.dhss.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/2019-ncov.htm>)
- Consider what you might do if childcare settings, schools, businesses, public transportation, or other community resources were to be shut down.
- Stock up on supplies you may need in the event that you are not able to get to a store or pharmacy, or stores run out of something. Suggestions include:
  - o Health and Medical Supplies:



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- 30 day supply of prescription medication.
- Over the counter medication (e.g., cough and cold, antidiarrheal).
- Prescribed medical supplies (e.g., glucose, blood pressure monitoring equipment).
- Groceries:
  - Consider keeping a 2 week-30 day supply of nonperishable foods at home. These items can also come in handy in other types of emergencies, such as power outages or snow storms.
  - Canned items, frozen foods, and dry food ingredients.
  - Bottled water.
- Personal and Household Cleaning Items:
  - Soap and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
  - Tissues, toilet paper, garbage bags, diapers, feminine products.
  - Laundry detergent, dish soap, household cleaners.

### **What to do if you feel sick:**

- Common symptoms of flu include: Fever, cough, sore throat, congestion, body aches, headache, fatigue, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- Common symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) include: fever, cough, shortness of breath, faintness.
- **First: Call your doctor for advice.** If you do not have a doctor, you can call your local board of health for advice. The NH Division of Public Health contact number is: 603-271-4496.
  - Public health care officials do not advise visiting a medical office unless you have symptoms of severe illness.
  - Medical professionals can advise you over the phone on the best course of action for evaluation and treatment- this might not be a doctor's office.
- Treatment recommendations are similar for any viral illness, including: rest, hydration, and use of over the counter medications for symptom relief as advised by your doctor.
- \*\*\*Please inform Community Bridges RDS if you are feeling sick. This is very important so that we can make a shared decision regarding participation in services, and inform anyone else who may have been exposed in the course of providing supports.

*Please note: guidelines are subject to change based on updated state and federal government directives.*

Sincerely,

Kyle Morse

Director of Program Development  
Community Bridges Residential & Day Services



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### **Information for staff:**

In the event of Coronavirus (COVID-19) illness among members of our staff, or members of their household, we will be implementing the following precautionary policies:

- Please disclose any recent or planned travel, either by yourself or any members of your household, to regions where outbreaks have been reported.
- Please notify your supervisor immediately if you or someone in your household are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
- Follow medical professional and health department recommendations regarding self-quarantine and isolation measures.
- If you are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, you may be asked not to come in to work.
- Prior to returning to work, you may be required to provide a doctor's note clearing you for duty, even if you have only requested one shift off.
  - o Please call your doctor's office first, prior to visiting the office in person.
  - o With consideration of any financial burden this may present, staff can have copays from their primary doctor or any local ConvenientMD center to Community Bridges for payment.
  - o Most insurance companies are currently waiving copays for Flu or COVID-19 testing, including our agency insurance Harvard Pilgrim.
  - o Please see attachment for list of local ConvenientMD locations and contact information.
- If you receive a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, you will be relieved from your scheduled shifts for the recommended quarantine period as per local health department directives.
- You may be asked to wear personal protective equipment in performing your job responsibilities (e.g. masks, gloves). We are working to secure supplies of this equipment in order to provide it as needed.

In the event of COVID-19 illness among individuals we support, we will be implementing the following precautionary policies:

- Some programs may be suspended, depending on diagnosis, service type, and level of risk associated with reduced supports.
- Some programs may operate with adjusted staffing ratios- e.g., a staffed residence may operate on the lower residential ratios, with consideration of limiting exposure and minimizing community access.
- Cross-coverage and overtime opportunities may be suspended to avoid spread across programs.
- If our programs are still operating based on management judgment and evaluation of risk, it is the expectation that staff report for their shift and perform their responsibilities to maintain the health and safety of the individuals we support.
- We are working to secure supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks, gloves, and gowns, in order to be able to provide it as needed.



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- If there is an exceptional reason that staff are unable to fulfill their responsibilities, a doctor's note will be required to excuse them from duty within that program.
  - o The note should not disclose specific risk factors (e.g. underlying health conditions of yourself or those in your household), but should be general in nature.
  - o With consideration of any financial burden this may present, staff can have copays from their primary doctor or any local ConvenientMD center to Community Bridges for payment.
  - o Most insurance companies are currently waiving copays for Flu or COVID-19 testing, including our agency insurance Harvard Pilgrim.
  - o Please see attachment for list of local ConvenientMD locations and contact information.
- If you are unable to work within your assigned program due to individual illness, you may be reassigned to work in a different program on a temporary basis.

## Locations

### Bedford

3 Nashua Road, Bedford, NH 03110  
 Phone: (603) 472-6700 | Fax: (603) 472-6701  
*Route 101; Next to Bedford High School*

### Dover

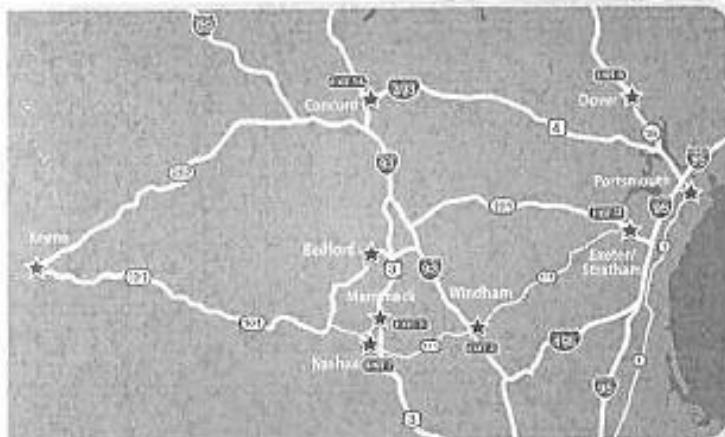
14 Webb Place, Dover, NH 03820  
 Phone: (603) 742-7900 | Fax: (603) 343-4749  
*Exit 9 of Spaulding Turnpike; Next to Starbucks*

### Keene

351 Winchester Street, Keene NH 03431  
 Phone: (603) 352-3406 | Fax: (603) 352-3416  
*At the Winchester Street Rotary*

### Nashua

565 Amherst Street, Nashua, NH 03063  
 Phone: (603) 578-3347 | Fax: (603) 578-3387  
*Across from Target on Amherst Street*



### Concord

8 Loudon Road, Concord, NH 03301  
 Phone: (603) 226-9000 | Fax: (603) 226-2268  
*Exit 14 off I-93; cross from Everett Arena*

### Exeter/Stratham

1 Portsmouth Avenue, Stratham, NH 03885  
 Phone: (603) 772-3600 | Fax: (603) 772-3601  
*Exit 11 of 101*

### Merrimack

2 Dobson Way, Merrimack, NH 03054  
 Phone: (603) 471-6069 | Fax: (603) 471-6068  
*Exit 11 off Merritt Turnpike*

### Windham

125 Indian Rock Road, Windham, NH 03087  
 Phone: (603) 890-6330 | Fax: (603) 458-7626  
*Exit 3 off I-93*

### Portsmouth

599 Lafayette Road, Portsmouth, NH 03801  
 Phone: (603) 942-7900 | Fax: (603) 630-1009  
*Next to Bowl-O-Rama on Lafayette Road*

***Open 8am to 8pm,  
 7 Days a Week***

**JUST WALK IN!**

Visit us at [www.ConvenientMD.com](http://www.ConvenientMD.com)