



Connecting Individuals with Disabilities to Their Community

To: Self Directed and In Home Supports
From: Human Resources
Re: Covid-19 Response
Dated: March 16, 2020

Dear Families and Employees in the Self-Directed and In Home Supports Programs,

This letter is provide you with the information we currently have regarding our response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. You can also find the most up-to-date information about our plans and response on our website at www.communitybridgesnh.org . Information is continually being updated and we will be sending out updates each week to stay connected with you. We are asking that you look for and read your emails and check the website on a regular basis to stay informed.

As of Thursday, March 12 we have implemented our Contingency Plan for the agency. This plan includes our response and plan for addressing a pandemic. Our management teams in each department are working with their teams to take steps for both the prevention of and reaction to any cases of Covid-19. All of the information and updates you need regarding the virus can be found in the link below:

<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/it-cold-or-flu-prevention-symptoms-treatments>

Relative to your program and supports, we will be continuing supports for individuals with precautions put into place. These precautions including not allowing any employee to come to work with cold or flu like symptoms. No one may work with a fever and the fever needs to be gone for 48 hours or more with no medication intervention.

How are we protecting our employees and individuals we support?

If an employee is showing **no signs** of cold or flu and your household is not showing **any signs** of cold or flu then the supports **can continue**. This will need to be a daily check-in with each other. How are you feeling? Do you have any concerns? You may NOT ask employee for their temperature or other health information. *Please note that limited community exposure at this time is advised. Make alternate plans for goals trying to avoid larger groups of people. Staying at least 6 feet away from others in public.

If an employee tells you that they will be traveling domestically/internationally then you will have to have a conversation with them about self-quarantining for a period of time upon their return before they come back to provide supports. They may reach out to their Doctor for advisement and then report that back to you.

70 Pembroke Road Concord, NH 03301 1-800-499-4153 603-225-4153 Fax 225-0376

If an employee tells you that they will be attending a concert or large gathering then you may want to have them self- quarantine for a period of time before they come back to provide supports. Have that conversation with your employee asking them if they will continue to attend given recent advice not to attend. Note: Many events are being cancelled so this situation will be rare.

If an employee comes to provide supports to you or a family member and presents with cold or flu like symptoms we are advising you to send them home and have them contact Community Bridges Human Resource office at 225.4153. We will be asking them to seek medical attention based on symptoms and advise them of next steps. You may also want to leave a message with Human Resources member so that we can track this information.

If an employee states they may have been exposed to the virus they are to self-quarantine per the instructions of their provider or for 14 days. Have them contact Community Bridges Human Resources office at 225.413. We will provide them with next step instructions.

If you and/or any household member has cold or flu like symptoms with a fever you are responsible for contacting the employee at least two hours in advance of their shift to let them know they should not show up. If they show up for work and you turn them away you are required to pay them for show up pay of two hours pay. This is a Department of Labor law that must be followed. DO NOT have the employee come back to work until you and/or household member is fever free for at least 48 hours without taking a fever reducing medication.

We are currently gathering information from the federal government on the way in which they be assisting us with employee paychecks for those that present with the virus or have been mandated to be in self-quarantine and need to be out of work. As the work support providers do is hands on and cannot be done remotely we will need to document every instance in which your family and support provider cannot work together due to this Pandemic.

Action Items for you to take:

1. Please contact Human Resources if you have any questions related to the employment of your support provider. You can reach Sherry Harding at 603.225.4153 X256 or you may reach Paige Smith at 603.225.4153 x286 Both Paige and Sherry will be available to answer your questions and/or research an answer and get back to you.
2. Please take extra precautions. Hand washing for employees as soon as they come into the home and frequent hand washing while providing supports is a must. You may also want to consider putting up a reminder sign at the door or near the work area.
3. Have a robust conversation with your support provider on the steps you will be doing and what they need to do to be safe and limit exposure. Make alternate plans for the day if needed to avoid crowds. If your you or family member volunteer in the community call to ask what the protocols are and if they are still having volunteers come to their establishment. Being flexible and creative during this time will limit stress.

4. If your support provider is feeling anxious or stressed regarding the Pandemic please let them know there is an Employee Assistance Program in place and to have them contact the following number: 603-227-7125. This is a FREE benefit and is absolutely CONFIDENTIAL.

5. New Hampshire has launched a 211 hotline, operated by Granite United Way, to handle all COVID-19 related calls from NH residents. If you have questions or concerns regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, you can call 2-1-1 at any time of day. Share this phone number with your family, friends, & community.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with our staff if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Community Bridges
Human Resource Team