Protecting Against COVID-19

Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, is ordering that adult day support and vocational habilitation services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities cannot be provided in congregate settings, effective 9 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2020. “Congregate settings” are single locations where more than 10 people (including staff and providers) are in a confined space.

- Due to the nature of facilities that provide these services, many will temporarily close.

- The order:
  
  o Applies to all adult day services, regardless of funding source.
  o Does not prohibit providing services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in residential settings, which are not congregate in nature.
  o Does not require buildings where adult day support or vocational habilitation services are provided in congregate settings to be closed to administration, staff, vendors, or contractors of the business locations. The administration of each building is to determine the appropriate level of access to the building during the closure.
  o Requires settings that provide services to follow universal precautions for infection control and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Ohio Department of Health to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
  o Requires providers to limit access to people who are “absolutely necessary for the operations of the provider,” including, but not limited to, administrators, staff, contract or emergency health care providers, and contractors, including critical on-site maintenance, vendors who provide necessary services, and governmental representatives and regulators and their contractors.
  o Requires that people necessary for operation at buildings be screened for COVID-19 each time they enter the facility, using guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Ohio Department of Health.
Additional information providers should know:

- The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) encourages providers to remain viable service options during this state of emergency by exploring how they can provide residential supports and day services in residential settings. Rules that require day services and vocational habilitation to be provided in community or work settings are being relaxed to recommend those services be provided in a person’s residence. Additional guidance on this can be found here.

- To get needed services and support to people with developmental disabilities, residential providers may need to augment their staffing resources with additional Homemaker/Personal Care (HPC) services in homes. Options to do this are available for both providers who are certified to deliver HPC services and providers who are not yet certified (through subcontracting or by applying to have HPC added to existing certifications).

- DODD is working with Ohio’s county boards of developmental disabilities, the Ohio Department of Medicaid, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to establish funding mechanisms to assist providers in maintaining at least baseline operations.

- While additional funding options are being developed, DODD will issue two weeks’ worth of sustainability payments to providers affected by this order. The amount paid to each provider will be based on the average paid claims. Priorities for use of the funding are paying and maintaining benefits of direct support professionals as well as other fixed expenses.

- DODD Support Teams are available and consist of staff ready to help county boards and providers.

- Additional information on this issue for people with disabilities, their families, service providers, direct support professionals, county boards of developmental disabilities, and the community at large can be found here.

For more information on COVID-19, please visit coronavirus.ohio.gov

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available. Call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 (1-800-846-8517 TTY); connect with a trained counselor through the Ohio Crisis Text Line by texting the keyword “4HOPE” to 741 741; or call the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services help line at 1-877-275-6364 to find resources in your community.
Protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by taking these precautions.

For additional information call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH or visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

- **STAY HOME**
- **PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING**
- **GET ADEQUATE SLEEP AND EAT WELL-BALANCED MEALS**
- **WASH HANDS OFTEN WITH WATER AND SOAP (20 SECONDS OR LONGER)**
- **DRY HANDS WITH A CLEAN TOWEL OR AIR DRY YOUR HANDS**
- **COVER YOUR MOUTH WITH A TISSUE OR SLEEVE WHEN COUGHING OR SNEEZING**
- **AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE, OR MOUTH WITH UNWASHED HANDS OR AFTER TOUCHING SURFACES**
- **CLEAN AND DISINFECT "HIGH-TOUCH" SURFACES OFTEN**
- **CALL BEFORE VISITING YOUR DOCTOR**
- **PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE HABITS**

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov