



Dear Families,

We care deeply about the health and safety of your loved ones and family members supported by Advocates. We are writing to update you on the deep measures we are taking at Advocates to help mitigate any spread of the Coronavirus within our community and our residential group living environments.

As of today, we currently have no reports of Coronavirus infecting any member of the Advocates community and continue to take direction from the Centers for Disease Control, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and state agencies.

To ensure the safety and health of everyone, there are several teams working diligently to provide direction, care, and support during this difficult time. Our Senior Leadership Team meets several times a day. We have developed a COVID-19 Management Team to support all programs, especially the group residences, and our Nursing Team meets daily to provide guidance, training, and support for all staff and residents.

Our Updates

- Every two hours, all high touch areas are being disinfected.
- A **no visitors' policy** is in place for all Advocates Group Living Environments (not including our Shared Living program) until further notice. Exceptions include visiting nurses, home health aides, cleaning crews, Advocates

facilities/IT staff for emergencies only, and emergency personnel. These individuals are instructed to wash hands immediately and disinfect faucets.

- All employees are being monitored and screened for Coronavirus symptoms before coming to work.
- Strict protocols for anyone demonstrating flu-like symptoms are implemented.
- We are being conservative with our measures to avoid the transmission of the virus. If there is a suspected Coronavirus case, we are functioning as if it is positive until we receive confirmed negative testing or alternative direction from PCP's.
- We are working to ensure all programs and individuals we support have adequate food and supplies on hand.
- We have a stock of personal protective equipment, and we're working with state authorities to ensure that we have an adequate supply going forward.
- Along with all other providers in the area, we have closed our Day Support program in Ashland until April 6.
- We are utilizing Telehealth for counseling, psychiatry, and to check in on people served when appropriate or as requested.

When someone we support in our residential programs is diagnosed with the Coronavirus, we will activate a Response Team to provide immediate intensive support, nursing direction, and personal protective equipment (PPE) so that your loved ones will be cared for safely. The Response Team will support and direct all action in the home. The nurses are instructed under the direction of our Chief Medical Director. We are currently exploring ideas and options for isolating individuals served.

We will continue to communicate any important information and actions taken at Advocates regarding the virus. Please visit www.Advocates.org/covid19 for the latest updates and [follow us on Facebook](#) for additional resources.

Please know that we care about you and your loved ones and want everyone to be healthy in the Advocates community.

Take care,

COVID-19 Family Communication 3/19/20 Email #2
Subject: Coronavirus update at Advocates

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