



Lifetime Assistance Inc.

TO: Lifetime Assistance service recipients, family members and guardians
FROM: Debra Argus – Director of Health Services
DATE: March 11, 2020
RE: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

We are all aware of the news reports regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Please be advised we are monitoring new developments very closely. First and foremost, please be assured that the health, safety and well-being of every person receiving Lifetime services remains our highest priority.

At this point, our primary focus is on prevention: Our entire workforce has received up to date information regarding the symptoms of COVID-19 and safe hygiene practices we can follow to keep everyone healthy. Fortunately, we already routinely follow most of these recommendations.

Key recommendations also apply to the general public and include the following:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing, using the bathroom, before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your nose, eyes and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick with respiratory illness symptoms or fever greater than 100.4.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol based hand sanitizer.
- Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces and objects such as tables, desks, door handles etc.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), this virus spreads in a similar way to the flu. When a person who has COVID-19, coughs or exhales, they release droplets of infected fluid. If coughs are not covered properly, droplets may fall on nearby surfaces and objects -- such as desks, tables or telephones. People could catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. Also, people standing near a person with COVID-19 can catch it by breathing in droplets coughed out or exhaled by the infected individual.

Health authorities advise that most people infected with COVID-19 experience mild symptoms and recover. However, some people experience more serious illness and may require hospital care. People with weakened immune systems, older adults, and people with conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease are more vulnerable to serious illness.

New guidance from NYS OPWDD requires us to screen all visitors over the phone and before admittance to any of our facilities or homes. Based on answers visitation may be restricted.

Guidance for screening visitors/members of the public using the following questions:

- *Have you traveled to a country for which the CDC has issued a Level 2 or 3 travel designation within the last 14 days?*
- *To your knowledge, have you had contact with any Persons Under Investigation (PUIs) for COVID-19 within the last 14 days, OR with anyone with known COVID-19?; and*
- *Do you have any symptoms of a respiratory infection (e.g., cough, sore throat, fever, or shortness of breath)?*

As this is a rapidly evolving situation, we are closely monitoring developments and will address needs as they arise. We are corresponding and collaborating with multiple resources, assuring the most up to date information, and responding accordingly. We are planning for multiple potential scenarios and developing effective solutions.

Thank you for your support and assistance, and cooperation in reducing the potential impact of the Coronavirus in our community.

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