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LYNN T. BESHEAR
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TO: DDD PROVIDER NETWORK
FROM: Division of Developmental Disabilities
RE: Response to COVID-19 (rel7)
DATE: 3/28/20

**Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Guidance for Alabama Community Providers of Services for
Individuals with Developmental Disabilities**

DDD Staff appreciate the effort of all Support Coordination and Direct Service Entities to keep the individuals we serve and those that support them safe.

We continued to have challenges receiving data from providers with COVID-19 information. New guidelines were sent this morning requiring all providers to submit data daily so we can better track and assist those not sending the information. The form is simple to complete, and providers should enter ZEROS where there are no incidents of the requested information. Please note all ADMH divisions/office Staff are submitting this information as well so to provide the Commissioner information that represents ADMH.

Due to the increased reports of positive test results and hospitalizations, providers should ensure they are screening Staff upon entry to include temperature checks, completing temperature checks on individuals served morning and evening, and are practicing social distancing and infection control guidelines as provided by the Alabama Department of Public Health.

The Governor has now set up a Strategic Assets Team to verify sources and legitimacy of PPE supplies. She has also organized the Business and Manufacturing Alliance to identify companies that could manufacture PPE. Approximately 34 companies across Alabama have been identified that could possibly switch over to produce PPE and some are moving forward to do so. Access to these important supplies is a challenge across the state. Please ensure you have contacted your local EMA to let them know of your needs, that you do provide an essential function of government, and the PPE supply needs you have in the event of exposure/quarantine within your setting. The Commissioner continues to report the need for PPE supplies on behalf of DDD community programs.

Thanks to your participation, an inventory of supplies is being developed. Providers are encouraged to use on-line, non-traditional, vendors like Amazon or others to obtain needed PPE and cleaning supplies if those items are not available from your current vendor. A list of vendors obtained from the survey will be provided first of next week. Please continue to check with your EMA and let them know of your needs for PPE supplies and how important it is to have these supplies especially when you have to quarantine a member in your residential setting or go into a person's home.

Provider FAQs are posted on the ADMH DDD COVID-19 webpage. If you have questions you would like included, please submit them to Shirley.Hicks@mh.alabama.gov. The FAQs will be reviewed weekly and the FAQs will be

updated as questions/responses are resolved.

DDD is developing a guideline to reference changes to service requirements as a result of COVID-19. We hope to have a version of this document out by noon tomorrow. The changes are developed to provide flexibility, to the extent possible, to providers and those receiving self-direct services so that individuals maintain health and safety. Waiver services will transition back to pre-emergency status by 7/1/2020. If the COVID-19 pandemic is still active in Alabama, the state will file for an extension. If a person receiving Waiver services has extenuating circumstances that will delay transition back to pre-emergency status by 7/1/2020, then the state will review such circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

Regional Offices and Support Coordination Entities (SCE) **MUST** be notified when a person is relocated or there is a significant change in the person's health and safety status.

Please see the attached memo and forms from the Alabama Medicaid Agency (AMA) for TB Skin Testing.

Should you reach a critical status regarding Staffing needs, please contact your Regional Office CSD. Critical situations are those defined when someone's health and safety is at risk. Regional Office CSDs are available to support you with guidance needed to resolve concerns.

The webpage <https://mh.alabama.gov/covid-19-dd/> acts as a repository for DDD communications, policies, and resources. Please check the provider section regularly for updated information.

The CSS Team is available to providers and individuals served as needed. Please go through the normal process to request assistance.

We ask that Support Coordination Entities (SCEs) share the information related to 'essential function' of government with those self-directing services to ensure there are no barriers for their staff hired by them to continue supports. The Support Coordinator should be prepared to explain the purpose of the designation as an 'essential function' and the intent of the letter. This designation allows ADMH staff and provider staff to continue their necessary work to help maintain the safety and wellbeing of those receiving waiver services. An example of how this designation can be used is in the event a geographical area is on lock down and workers need to get to the location of service. The designation may not guarantee the following but they are possible examples as well: if needed, to request supplies from vendors where supplies may be limited; access to emergency services; recognition by other government agencies. The designation is approved and should be used only as it relates to the needs of individuals served through DDD's HCBS Waiver services.

Attached also are additional resources that may be of benefit to you, your staff, individuals served and families. Please feel free to share.

For Small Business loans

<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance>

New study suggests how long coronavirus can stay on surfaces

<https://www.walb.com/2020/03/23/new-study-suggests-how-long-covid-can-stay-surfaces/>