

ACS Corona Virus Preparedness Plan – March 19th, 2020 : 8:30pm

Dear ACS parents, families, and partnering providers,

All our Day Programs remain open. We continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation as it evolves and will be providing updates on a regular basis. If you or someone you know is not receiving our emails who should, please contact the office so we can add it to our list. We are also posting these notices to our website at <https://www.abilitychoice.org> . Our previous message from March 13th, is also posted if you missed it.

Latest Law/Rule Changes

As many of you know, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act measure includes provisions that expand the FMLA to include public emergency family and medical leave, provide emergency unemployment insurance, emergency paid sick leave, and tax credits to employers for paid sick and paid family and medical leave, among other relief.

This will help our staff who are missing work for related reasons while we progress through this unprecedented event so that they can be there when our services start ramping back up.

Today the Salt Lake County Health Department ordered that “no gatherings over 10 people shall be held.” The Health Department has clarified:

"The order is consistent with federal recommendation and is intended to keep people at least 6 feet away from each other to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Workplaces can have more than 10 people in their building, but they should be separated into different rooms or by physical space." Nicholas Rupp, a spokesman for the Salt Lake County Health Department said in a text message to FOX 13. "The goal is to prevent one person's respiratory droplets from another person's immediate vicinity. "

ACS has already been operating under this standard all week. This allows us to be at about 75% capacity due to the extra space we have above what is required under our license at each location. Please contact the main office for more information or if you would like to return sooner than indicated previously.

Earthquake

All of our locations are operational and were not affected by the earthquake. We remain open to provide day services.

Operational Changes

As mentioned before, at ACS, our emphasis is on keeping our participants and day services hubs healthy and planning for any potential increases of COVID-19 cases in the future.

We have already temporarily adjusted our practices to minimize the impact to our participants, staff and the community. This includes:

- Focusing on center-based activities
 - Maintaining where practicable three-foot separation between our participants
 - Carefully considering activities with direct contact

- Keeping group sizes less than 10 people including staff: our groups are separated with significant spacing or in separate rooms generally around six participants and two staff
- Delaying the face-to-face portion of work assessments and job development:
 - We are in the process of setting up compliant systems including AnyMeeting and Telehealth
 - These remote systems require that all parties are using both voice and video in order to provide services in this manner
- Increasing the frequency and scope of cleaning and disinfecting common touch surfaces
- All personnel, participants and visitors are subject to screening per Health Department recommendations
- Continually reviewing treatment programs and adjusting based on available staffing and critical supplies

Participant's and Team Choices (from DSPD)

- For the time being, PCSP meetings will need to be held via a secure video conferencing system. We are in the process of setting up Telehealth with the DOH but can also use our AnyMeeting system as it is HIPAA compliant. These should be available next week, please contact the office for more information if you have a meeting coming up you would like to schedule with one of these services.
- We may be able to provide some check-in type services for our Supported Living and Supported Employment participants using these systems as well in the short term. Stay tuned.
- DSPD has made it clear that it is up to each participant and/or Team to make decisions on a case by case basis as to whether to come to the Day Program or participant in other services:
 - *The decision to send an individual to a day program must be made on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration a person's needs, choice, and their personal risk, and the group size of their services (see below regarding group size). These decisions need to be made by the individual and their team to determine the safest available alternative for their unique circumstances. We must thoughtfully think about ways to protect the individual and the wellbeing of the staff and individuals being served in the day support programs.*
 - *If the Person-Centered Support Team or Child and Family Team determine that an individual shouldn't attend their day program, the team will need to make appropriate alternate arrangements for the individual. In all divisions DHS is seeking to expedite authorizations for these changes. For DCFS and DJJS, please work through the case manager. See below for the process DSPD will be using to help modify Person-Centered Support Plans and budgets for these situations.*
 - *Residential providers should screen individuals, keep individuals home if they show signs of illness or if they live with someone who is ill, and communicate with day program providers if someone is not going to attend.*
 - *Group size must be limited to 10 or less including staff and clients. [see note above regarding the group sizes at our programs]*

Community Responsibilities

As a support agency that cares for many immune compromised individuals, we ask you to keep doing your part to slow the spread of COVID-19.

- Stay home if you are sick and keep your participants home if they are sick.

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Contact the COVID-19 hotline with any questions or concerns over your or a family members health at: 800-456-7707

All staff, participants visitors to any of our programs and people receiving home-based services in homes are subject to additional screening if they are exhibiting symptoms of the COVID-19 virus which include: dry coughing, compromised respiration/difficulty breathing and fever. Anyone arriving at one of our settings who is exhibiting these symptoms is subject to being asked to return home, or in the case of home settings staff may cancel the shift when practicable.

Our intent is to continue providing services as long as it is practicable, safe and have available staff and critical supplies to do so.

You can visit the following websites for more information about COVID-19:

- State of Utah website: <https://coronavirus.utah.gov/> (links on this page for the test assessment tool)
- Salt Lake County Health Department website: <https://slco.org/health/COVID-19/>
- Centers for Disease Control website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

We will continue to update our partners periodically utilizing our main website at:

<https://www.abilitychoice.org>

Sincerely,

Dan Fazzini,
Executive Director