

ACS Corona Virus Preparedness Plan – March 29th, 2020

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 messages are posted there in case you have missed them.

Latest on Stay Home Orders:

Governor Herbert has issued a Stay-At-Home recommendation and some cities have issued the same instruction as “orders.” Our industry falls under the “social services” exception portion of the order:

Charitable and social services organizations, including workers supporting organizations that provide food, shelter, prescription delivery, mental health and substance abuse treatments, and other social services, as well as other necessities of life for individuals in need of such services, older adults who live alone, people with disabilities, and those who need assistance as a result of this emergency.

The full order can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/ukbaalo>. Likewise, the Homeland Security also considers our industry as “essential.” <https://tinyurl.com/u8j94wo>

Workers who support food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for needy groups and individuals, including in-need populations and COVID-19 responders (including travelling medical staff).

Supported Living: For us, this means that our supported living services can and should continue as needed where our assistance is helpful for the care of the people we serve. It must be carried out only if we can provide the services in a safe manner which means that if the person or someone else in the household is symptomatic, additional precautions (such as PPE’s) may be required in order to provide services in the home. Please contact your director for clarification, in most cases we are screening all unique situations with the Health Department and/or the CDC.

While providing services at the participant’s home, staff should follow the guidance as set out by the CDC, State and local municipality in regard to activities and travel from the home with the participant.

Day Program: Pursuant to DSPD and CDC guidelines at this time, our current operation mode of our Day Programs is sufficient to meet the requirements set out by the CDC. We are operating following CDC guidance on how we manage our spaces, groups, visitors, staff and participants in the space and social distancing relevant to our setting as outlined below.

Our Day Programs are providing a vital role in the care of the greater population we serve. For the most part, participants currently attending have limited options for proper care in their residential setting during the day for a variety of reasons including natural supports who work in other essential businesses including first responders and other critical industries directly fighting the pandemic. We will continue with the reduced staff scheduling which we have been operating under the past couple of weeks.

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. We are working with DSPD, Utah Department of Health, Homeland Security and the Centers for Disease Control and following their guidance for all our services we provide.

All staff, participants visitors to any of our programs and people receiving home-based services in homes are subject to additional screening.

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