



February 11th, 2022 - EOP update

Dear ACS Families, Friends and Community Partners,

On February 2, 2022, Groundhog's Day, Phil the groundhog saw his shadow predicting six more weeks of winter. Lucky for us, with or without the shadow, Spring is a short six weeks away and we are looking forward to the warmer weather and better health that comes with the changing seasons.

The case counts in Utah are on a steady decline and we wanted to send a quick update regarding the impact that will have on our operations. We are excited! We hope you are too!

The following are the changes that most directly impact participants and staff:

- Masks are **suggested** for all staff while working with clients or other staff, **required for close contact**.
- **Optional Weekly testing**
- **ACS Transportation requires masks (no exceptions)**. Seating on transport will be one client per for those who chose to disclose being unvaccinated and 2 clients per row for those who are vaccinated.
- Recreational trips in the community will be approved that do not require a transportation time of more than 10 minutes. We will continue avoiding high traffic locations where there would be a higher risk of exposure.

We meet and evaluate changes every week and have outlined parameters in our public health emergency operations plan that guide our team in decision making. We hope with the rapid decline in cases that we will be sending emails with lifted restrictions more frequently and that all of us, as a community, can celebrate a reprieve from these perpetually looming health concerns.

More Updates...

In case you have not heard, we are making exceptional strides on Utah's Capitol Hill to increase funding for staff wages. At this time, the requests that have been made are listed as priority #1 and #2 for the appropriations committee. To those of you that have reached out to your representatives and expressed your support of these efforts, THANK YOU! For those that would like to get involved, feel free to click the link below for more information.

<https://www.crisisofcare.com/>

ACS IS HIRING

In conjunction with the progress being made to increase staff wages across the state, as an agency, Ability and Choice Services has made the decision to raise our starting pay to \$15 per hour now, rather than waiting until July when any new funding would take effect. To acknowledge our staff for their dedication and commitment we raised all of their wages accordingly. We would like to publicly thank them for their hard work, sacrifice, and dedication to the participants we serve. We could not do what we do without you!

If you know anyone that you feel would make a good addition to our team, please encourage them to apply at <https://www.abilitychoice.org/hr>

We wish you all a safe and happy February!

Sincerely,

Kendra and Dan