



## REOPENING OF DAY SERVICES CERTIFIED BY OPWDD

JULY 15, 2020

This Interim Guidance provides guidelines for Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) certified day programs and services, both site and community based including Day Habilitation, Prevocational Services, Sheltered Workshops, Day Treatment, and Respite, to resume operations safely and consistently with the Governor's NY Forward initiative.

Effective July 15, 2020 for regions of the State that have entered Phase Four in accordance the New York Forward Reopening Plan these guidelines set forth minimum requirements based on best-known public health practices at time of the State's reopening. Providers are not required to reopen day programming at this time; if they choose to do so, they must be in compliance with the reopening guidance.

It is important to note that each day program has authority to implement additional precautions and/or increased restrictions necessary to meet program specific and individual specific needs.

### OPWDD GUIDANCE

- OPWDD certified programs may reopen if they meet the minimum safety standards outlined by the CDC, EPA, OSHA, DOH and OPWDD while maintaining minimum standards of the America with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Signs must be posted for:
- Social distancing requirements, mask/face covering, PPE usage, proper hand hygiene and use of hand sanitizer, symptoms monitoring and exposure reporting.

### REQUIRED DAY PROGRAM REOPENING PLANS

Entrance to Site Based and Participation in Community Based Programs

- All staff, visitors and people supported will be screened for COVID-19 signs and symptoms prior to entry. Results are documented as pass/fail and no health information is recorded.
- Any person or staff exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19 upon arrival will not be allowed to enter the program building. They will be required to return home until they are fever free for 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- If symptoms begin while at program the person or staff must be sent home as soon as possible and remain separate from people who are well.
- People sent home from program will need to consult with their healthcare practitioner prior to returning to the program.
- People may not return to or attend the day program while a member of their household or certified residence are being quarantined or isolated.
- All people and staff must perform hand hygiene immediately upon entering the program and throughout the day.
- Programs will maintain a log of staff and visitor who have close contact with people supported to include contact information for tracing purposes in the event someone is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Entrance to site is restricted to essential staff providing direct support that can not be done via telehealth.



## SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES

All day program providers must ensure that, for any programming occurring indoors, the number of people and staff allows for social distancing strategies to be maintained.

- At least six feet of physical distance is maintained between people supported and staff unless for safety of activity or the person's plan requires closer contact be maintained.
- All staff must wear a face mask or covering at all times will at work.
- People supported must wear face coverings, if they can medically tolerate one, whenever social distancing cannot be achieved.
- Group sizes can be no larger than 15 people, not counting staff. With minimal to no contact with each other.
- Staffing plans should not require staff to "float" between different rooms or groups unless it is critical to the safety of the people supported.
- Shared workspaces and equipment must be disinfected between use.
- Increase ventilation by opening windows and doors whenever it doesn't pose a health or safety risk.
- Reduce two-way foot traffic in halls, isles, etc. whenever possible.

## GATHERINGS IN ENCLOSED SPACES

- No more than 15 people (excluding staff) in a shared space.
- Program rooms should include the same people and staff each day to the extent possible.
- No shared food or drinks. Food sent from home should require limited preparation and packed appropriately (i.e. in a microwavable container if heating is needed).
- Reusable food utensils will be washed in a dishwasher on the hottest wash/dry cycle.
- No buffet-style dining, and no use of large cafeterias for meals, unless social distancing can be maintained, and stagger mealtimes to allow for social distancing and disinfection in-between use.

## DAY PROGRAM SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES

Day program capacity should be prioritized for people who are best served onsite due their specific clinical needs. Providers should allow high risk people, who prefer to remain at home, to participate in less intensive in-home supports of a shorter duration and encourage continued use of telehealth to supplement service delivery.

For those people resuming site-based day services, programs must implement measures to foster social distancing and disinfection in-between use via the following considerations.

- Adjusting day program hours to allow blocks of service provision (e.g. 9 AM to 1 PM and 2 PM to 6 PM).
- Limiting staff on site to those essential to direct service provision.
- For sport and athletic activities, programs must keep stable groups of people together and separated from other groups and should focus on activities with little or no physical contact (e.g. walking or hiking) and which do not rely on shared equipment.



## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Day programs must have an adequate supply of required PPE on site. All required staff and essential visitors are required to wear a face covering or mask and will be provided one for use onsite at no cost.

## HYGIENE AND CLEANING

All site based day programs, and non site-based programs to the extent it is applicable, are required to implement the following minimum standards.

- Maintain an adequate stock of cleaning and approved disinfecting agents.
- Conduct frequent cleaning and disinfection of high-risk areas (i.e. bathrooms, nursing stations) and high touch surfaces (i.e. shared equipment or supplies).
- Limit use of shared objects/equipment and clean then sanitize after each use. Items that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used (i.e. soft toys, cloth placemats, etc.). People should not bring such personal items from home to program.
- Reasonable measures to limit the sharing of objects, such as electronic equipment, arts and craft materials, touchscreens, as well as the touching of shared surfaces.
- Provide and maintain hand hygiene stations throughout each location where possible.

## TRANSPORTATION

- Only people and staff traveling to and from the same day program should be transported together; people or staff from other day programs should not be intermingled for purposes of transportation.
- Capacity on buses, vans, and other vehicles transporting people from multiple residences should be reduced to 50% of total capacity.
- To the extent possible, people and staff from different households should restrict close contact by not sitting near each other.
- To the extent they can medically tolerate one, people supported, staff, and the driver must wear face coverings at all times in the vehicle. Social distancing must be maintained for individuals who cannot tolerate wearing a mask and, when possible, such people should be transported alone or with members of the same household.
- Staff who cannot medically tolerate the use of a face covering should not be assigned to transport people at this time.
- After each trip is completed, the interior of the vehicle should be thoroughly cleaned before additional individuals are transported.
- Where appropriate and safe, windows should be rolled down to permit air flow.

## TRACING AND TRACKING

- Providers of day program services must notify the local health department and OPWDD immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result of a person supported or staff at their site.
- Local health departments will implement monitoring and movement restrictions of infected or exposed persons including home isolation or quarantine.

[View complete guidance here](#)

