

July 29, 2021

To: All Hope Stakeholders

From: Senior Leadership Team

COVID-19 General Policy for Hope Community Resources Inc.

We are grateful that Summer 2021 offers many opportunities to reconnect with each other and family members in person, both in-state and out-of-state. Your continued efforts to “be careful but not fearful” have brought so much joy and fun back into our lives as we enjoyed picnics, shared holiday celebrations and exploring our wonderful state. We recognize you are tired, weary of COVID-19, yet you have been heroically supporting each other to take much needed breaks through extra shifts and overtime. The unexpected workforce shortage across the nation hasn’t helped and we can’t afford to go backwards in our battle against the pandemic.

Thank you very much for keeping Hope’s mission and values alive in 2021!

The start of the school year is just around the corner holding lots of promise for students and parents eager for school to resume in person. This also comes with annual Fall colds, flu and other sicknesses. We learned from 2020 that many precautions we took against COVID-19 actually prevented many of these sicknesses too. These include regular handwashing, high contact surface sanitizing, and the use of masks and social distancing.

Unfortunately, the State of Alaska has seen a sharp rise of COVID-19 cases in the past two weeks, being the 3rd highest increase of hospitalization of all states in the nation. A very high percentage of hospitalizations are unvaccinated and younger people, as the result of a new strain known as the Delta variant. This virus is sneaky and it’s easy to relax our vigilance so we are asking that we all **“WORK SAFE to KEEP OTHERS SAFE”**. Mostly, this means making sure that we continue doing the things that helped us be successful during the Spring and Summer in reducing the number of cases that the Hope Healthline is tracking.

Several new updates to Hope’s COVID-19 Policy have been issued including the most recent guidance and mandates from the Federal Center for Disease Control, the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services mandates, the State

of Alaska Public Health Department, Senior and Disabilities Services, the Department of Licensing, and the Municipality of Anchorage Emergency Orders.

Updates to the following policies are being made and posted to our Sharepoint link (News & Activities), and the www.hopealaska.org website:

1. Employee Ready for Work Policy (All Environments)

- **Electronic Daily Health Screening before starting work remains mandatory**
- **Travel out of state policies are also updated**
- **Wash your hands frequently, wash your mask frequently**
- **Vaccination is your personal choice but it may offer additional benefits in reducing the risk of hospitalization and death related to the Delta variant. Research the benefits of vaccination at <http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/sleevesup.aspx>**

2. Assisted Living and Congregate Settings

- **Direct support staff who do not live in an ALH home wear masks while on shift**

3. Independent and Natural Home Settings

4. Community Based Activities, including Medical Appointments, Group Activities, Recreational Opportunities, and Therapeutic Activities

5. Office and Administrative Settings

- **Remain secured to general public without an appointment or completing daily screening checks before allowed entry**

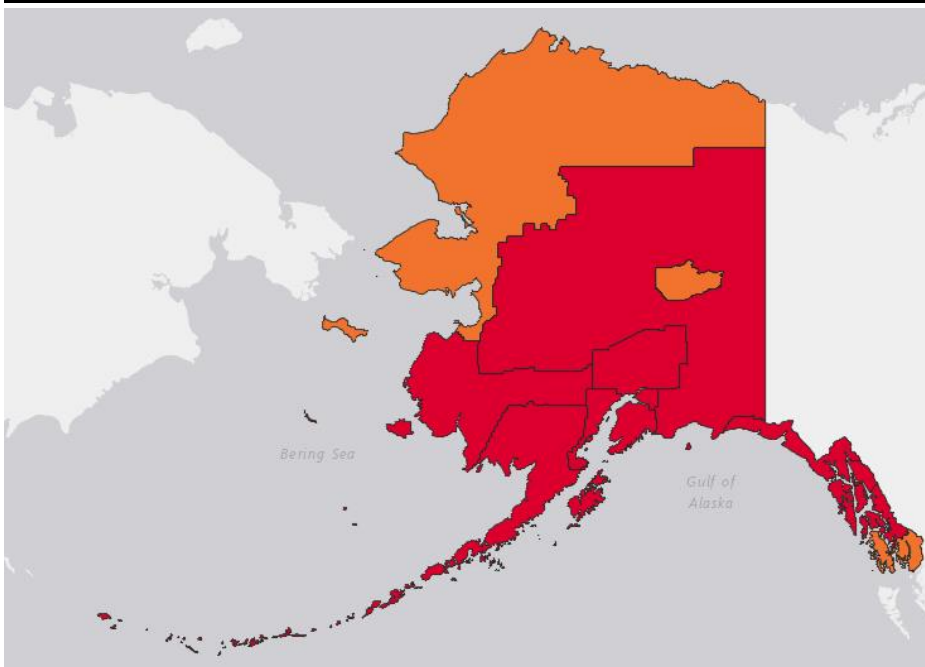
Federal Government Declarations and Guidance (July 19 & July 27, 2021):

- Public Health Emergency issued by the Biden Administration extended until October 18, 2021
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) has authorized current flexibilities for waivers (Appendix K) until October 20, 2021

- CDC guidance (July 27, 2021) updated for fully vaccinated people (2 weeks after their 2nd dose) recommends wearing a mask indoors in public areas to maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possible spread
- FDA approved the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for US children as young as 12 years old (May 10, 2021). Studies are ongoing to understand how long COVID-19 vaccines can protect people

State of Alaska Public Health Disaster Emergency (expired Feb 14, 2021)

- DHSS continues to operate under the same guidance and direction previously provided
- Governor Dunleavy Urges Alaskans to Practice Common Safety Measures as Hospitals Near Capacity (July 27, 2021) – including taking advantage of the free COVID-19 vaccine
- Sleeves up for Summer Campaign offers vaccination opportunities
<http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/sleevesup.aspx>
- **Increased Cases and Hospitalizations in recent weeks has returned Alaska to high alert**



- Vaccination distribution: ALL Alaskans over the age of 12 years are now eligible
- State Health Advisory No.2: Safe travel advisory contains various options and employers can require testing after arrival and second test 5-14 days later
- Visitation Guidelines for Residential Congregate settings (June 11, 2021) outline guidance specific to residents and visitor vaccination status. This also applies to Care Coordination and Licensing visits.

Employee Ready for Work Policy (All Environments)

Hope expects employees to act responsibly when at work or off duty by:

- Staying home if you are feeling sick
- Washing hands frequently
- Wearing a face mask whenever six feet distancing cannot be maintained, or indoors in a public setting
- Practicing social distancing of six feet or more from non-family member
- Complying with travel mandates for the State of Alaska as applicable to Hope

Hope requires employees getting ready for work to:

- Review daily health screening questions before leaving their home
- Check that their temperature is below 100.3 deg F
- Assure they have personal protective equipment such as gloves, face mask, (and face shields and outer protective clothing, as required)

Hope requires employees reporting for work to:

- Have their temperature scanned before entering a worksite building
- Complete an electronic daily health screening using the online tool, unless an exception is granted to complete a paper form
- To respect our employee's privacy and personal choice regarding vaccinations, any responses to the daily screening questions about vaccination will be held confidential by the Human Resources Department and not shared with your co-workers without your permission. For the protection of all employees' and recipients' health and privacy, we will maintain the requirement to wear a mask indoors, if you are not a household member.

CLEARANCE FOR RETURN TO WORK AFTER COVID-19 QUARANTINE

Any employee returning from quarantine must have an interview with Hope's Medical Director, Dr. Browner and have evidence of a second negative COVID-19 test within 7 days if they were quarantined for a positive test. COVID-19 test results must be from the nose or throat swab, not a blood test.