

November 16, 2020

To: All Hope Stakeholders

From: Senior Leadership Team

### **COVID-19 General Policy for Hope Community Resources Inc.**

Hope's COVID-19 Policy includes 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.

### **CDC Thanksgiving 2020 Activity limitations:**

- Having a small dinner with only people who live in your household.
- Preparing traditional family recipes for family and neighbors, especially those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19, and delivering them in a way that doesn't involve contact with others.
- Having a virtual dinner and sharing recipes with friends and family.
- Shopping online rather than in person on the day after Thanksgiving or the next Monday.
- Watching sports events, parades, and movies from home.

### **State of Alaska Governor Dunleavy Emergency Alert Nov 12, 2020**

- Alaska COVID-19 Status is Red
- Health care workers, first responders and service members are being infected at unprecedented rates
- Wear masks and remain socially distant
- Take action to protect yourself, your workforce communities
- Celebrate holidays differently this year

### **Municipality Emergency Orders Nov 06, 2020**

- EO-13 Requirement to wear masks or cloth face coverings indoors in public settings or communal spaces outside, and outdoors when 6 feet spacing cannot be maintained
- EO-14 At-risk individuals should reduce exposure by staying home, limits on gathering size and retail businesses

Increased cases in the past two weeks have resulted in a High Alert Status for most of the State of Alaska. From the DHSS website today:



Effective July 28, 2020 Governor Dunleavy released this guidance for Alaska...

Local Mitigation Guidance					
Recommended Mitigation Level	Face coverings / masks	Social Distance	Large Gatherings	Restaurants	Bars and Nightclubs
<b>High</b>	Masks/face coverings <u>must be worn</u> when: 6 feet of distance can't be maintained from others, this is for outdoors and indoor public spaces	6 feet of distance must be maintained	Gatherings of more than 50 people indoors is not recommended  Encourage outdoor events	Indoor capacity is reduced to 50% Dining parties limited to family units Encourage delivery/ carryout/ curbside or outside dining in family units. Employees must wear masks	Indoor capacity is reduced to 25%  Encourage outdoor serving with social distancing  6 foot of distance maintained all times  Employees must wear masks
<b>Moderate</b>	Masks/face coverings must be worn when: indoor public spaces and 6 feet of distance can't be maintained from others  Masks/face coverings recommended when: outdoors and 6 feet of distance can't be maintained from others	6 feet of distance must be maintained	Gatherings of more than 100 people indoors is not recommended  Encourage outdoor events	Indoor capacity must be reduced to maintain 6 feet of distance.  Encourage delivery/ carryout/ curbside or outside dining in family units.  Employees must wear masks	Indoor capacity reduced to 50%  Encourage outdoor serving  Employees must wear masks
<b>Minimal</b>	Masks/face coverings recommended when: 6 feet of distance can't be maintained from others	6 feet of distance should be maintained	Strong recommendation for limiting gathering size so a minimum distance of 6 feet can be maintained	Delivery/carryout/curbside encouraged.  Outdoor dining encouraged.	Indoor capacity must be reduced to maintain 6 feet of distance Employees must wear masks

**Hope's Policies embrace the responsibility of all community members to practice these measures, especially as cases continue to quickly rise in Alaska.**

- **All direct support staff must wear masks or face coverings during their shift except for meal or other breaks. Staff who live in the home must also wear masks or face coverings while other staff are on shift. Recipients should wear masks or face coverings as tolerated.**
- **Staff who live in the ALH home and have no other staff entering the ALH entering the home may be excused from wearing masks or face coverings, if groceries and supplies are delivered and off-work activities do not bring exposure risk to the home.**
- **Daily health screening forms must be completed using the online tool for family members of ALH live-in staff who also reside in the home. For family members daily screening, use the primary live-in staff employee ID followed by F1, F2. For example, 1234F1, 1234F2. 1234F3 if there are 3 family members for employee 1234.**

- **All office and administrative staff must wear masks or face coverings during their work shift except for meal or other breaks.**
- **NO THANKSGIVING 2020 physical visits into the home or recipients going to family homes per CDC Thanksgiving 2020 limitations.**
- **Maintain social distancing of 6 feet or more, if you are not providing direct care**
- **Wash your hands frequently. Wash your face mask frequently, if it is designed for using again.**
- **New research shows that the virus can stay on surfaces for up to 9 hours but sanitizing kills it within seconds. Maintain high-contact surface cleaning with bleach solution several times each day.**
- **All employees are strongly encouraged to get your flu shots.**
- **When you are off-work, consider that anyone you come into contact with could be exposing you to COVID-19**
- **Clearance to return to work by the Hope Healthline if you have symptoms or have traveled is still required, even though State of Alaska or Anchorage Public Health may say you have completed isolation**

### **BALANCING PERSON-CENTERED LIVES while REOPENING RESPONSIBLY**

While many of the current restrictions emphasize Hope's value of safety and security bringing other values of relationship, joy, choice, opportunity, individuality and dignity into focus is equally important. Hope is utilizing an existing structure of support team meetings to assess and implement risk/benefit discussions. Accessing meaningful life opportunities as Alaska re-opens and experiences the effect of increased cases, this approach maintains Hope's approach of "the language of Yes" and avoids a "one size fits all" restriction level.

Guardians or family members who live in-state may use the support team planning process with some additional discussion tools to develop an individualized approach and also addresses risks to other residents. These include:

- The AADD COVID-19 emergence for SDS matrix to understand a variety of factors in considering safety/restriction levels
- The AADD Reopening Risk Benefit Discussion Guide May 2020 to assess what risk level and additional safeguards might be needed based on situational, age, health and residential factors
- The AADD Risk Level descriptions for Community Settings and possible additional safeguards to consider for lowering risk

- The Support Planning Team Notes document to record the discussion regarding the individual, and including the Care Coordinator for potential Appendix K amendment need
- A Home Alliance Team record (as applicable) to assure that other residents and guardians are in alignment

**Remaining diligent in staying safe while not working is equally important in order to follow the specific policies (summarized below) for:**

- 1. Employee Ready for Work Policy (All Environments)**
- 2. Assisted Living and Congregate Settings**
- 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**

### **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, or 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

Training has been enhanced to teach all COVID-19 policies as part of new hire orientation.

#### **CLEARANCE FOR RETURN TO WORK AFTER COVID-19 QUARANTINE**

**Receiving a phone call or letter from a Public Health nurse stating you have completed a home-isolation period does not clear you for return to work at Hope. Due to working with individuals at higher risk of COVID-19 infection, Hope is applying a higher standard for clearance to return to work.**

**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 10-14 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.**

#### **Assisted Living and Congregate Settings**

Hope's Policies are reflective of our organizational values seeking to achieve balance between safety & security and joy, relationships, choice and independence while incorporating compliance with health mandates and guidance from funding and regulatory authorities.

**The Department of Health and Social Services issued COVID-19 Recommended Guidance for Congregate Residential Settings on June 30, 2020 outlining consideration and mitigation steps with criteria that MUST be met prior to transitioning to the next re-opening phase.**

**Phase I is the highest level of vigilance**

**Phase II allows limited visitation for compassionate care, essential medical professionals and close family members**

**Phase III allows visitation of non-essential healthcare/contractors and volunteers**

These considerations include:

- Community Case status in the region (average cases per 100,000 per day over 14 days)
- Congregate setting Case status (no new cases in the setting for 14 days)
- Adequate Staffing
- Access to Adequate Testing
- Access to Adequate Personal Protective Equipment and Universal Precautions
- Resident/Staff Testing
- Dining/Group Activities
- Community Trips
- New Admissions

Hope's Senior Leadership Team conducts a weekly review of active cases within the State as reported by DHSS and the trends indicated. Cases for both residents and non-residents are

significant as travel into the State of Alaska is not closely managed for quarantine purposes and many exposure events are directly related to travel activities.

Data from November 11, 2020 reports show that support **Hope remains in high vigilance (Phase I) for all assisted living homes**, with continued use of a value based risk/benefit discussion tool to develop person-centered mitigation plans to encourage safe outdoor activities, exercise and family visits.

Anchorage Region: 7,644 active cases, 79 avg case rate last 14 days trending up (94.2 avg case rate last 7 days)

Kenai Region: 1,019 active cases, 66.1 avg case rate last 14 days trending up (83.2 avg case rate last 7 days)

Kodiak: 83 active cases, 23.1 avg case rate last 14 days trending up (24.2 avg case rate last 7 days)

Matsu Region: 1599 active cases, 53.7 avg case rate last 14 days trending up (55.3 avg case rate last 7 days)

We understand that many residents in assisted living homes are struggling with the inability to see their parent/guardian/family members in person. Non-essential visits inside the Assisted Living Home are NOT permitted, including State of Alaska Licensing inspections and Care Coordination visits.

Guardians or family members have access to each home via a tablet and ZOOM capability or traditional phone calls. Zoom meetings allow visual connection. Consider new and unique ways for residents to connect remotely with loved ones as we enter into this winter season in Alaska.

**Senior and Disabilities Services maintains the COVID-19 Guidance for Long Term Care, Residential and Assisted Living Facilities issued March 23, 2020 by the State of Alaska Public Health Department Epidemiology.**

**The components of Hope's policy already in place, based on this planning guidance includes:**

- A. Hope Health line to answer questions and assist staff**
- B. Actively watching for changes in symptoms of recipients daily**
- C. Screen all staff at the beginning of their shift (with the Daily Screening Form)**
- D. Restrict and log all visitors, except essential visitors such as medical providers. Communicate with all visitors why restrictions are in place and how important it is to protect residents. (This sets the current expectation that NO VISITORS are allowed into Assisted Living Homes, including guardians and parents).**
- E. Cancel all group activities, except within the same household**

**Hope has designated and equipped separate home environments which will be used to isolate any recipients who may contract COVID-19 and receive positive test results.**

## **Independent and Natural Home Settings**

Hope's policy in residential environments that are not owned and operated by Hope emphasize safety for the resident, and encourage out-of-the home activities as much as possible.

Recipients living in Independent apartments who need assistance in maintaining their residence, and to enter stores to purchase groceries and supplies must follow additional precautions to avoid contamination. The recipient will be coached in social distancing, planning to minimize shopping in stores, and handwashing/decontamination practices. These include wearing personal protective equipment of gloves and face masks, then immediately disposing of used gloves when leaving the store.

Lack of access to personal care services like hairdressing salons, and other services that normalize life, like a phone replacement may be increasingly challenging for our recipients! If there is a pressing need to access these services, make a plan and contact the Hope Health Line for approval.

In Natural Home settings, out-of-home activities and supports are encouraged to avoid entry into the home. For situations that require entry into the home, a person centered plan utilizing the risk/benefit discussion guide needs to be completed and submitted to the Hope Health Line for approval.

For the protection of staff, Hope supervisory representatives will also make weekly check-ins with these environments to evaluate risk levels based on occupants adhering to the State of Alaska guidance and mandates regarding social distancing, wearing face coverings, and travel activity.

## **Community Based Activities including Medical Appointments, Group Activities, Recreational Opportunities, and Therapeutic Activities**

Activities for recipients outside the home are encouraged for getting fresh air and exercise with face coverings and where social distancing of at least six feet from other people in public can be maintained!

**Medical Appointments:** First contact the provider to learn what their personal protective procedures are and whether accompanying staff are allowed into the appointment. Ask the provider if not doing the procedure or keeping an appointment would more harmful than the risk of COVID exposure. Ask if the procedure requires a COVID test to be completed beforehand. Make a plan for keeping the appointment and send it into the Hope Health Line at least 72 hours before the appointment for approval or plan adjustment.

### **Group Activities:**

In addition to the general protocols, a hybrid model of distance learning and outdoor activities will be utilized. Additional personal protective equipment protocols apply to participants unable to



appropriately wear a face covering throughout, and additional distancing will occur during physical activity periods. Some planned mask breaks will be managed closely also to ensure safe distancing.

Staff will be assigned to no more than three recipients at a time and will work consistently with the same group at their activity station. Each activity station will have a maximum of 10 people.

**Transportation for Community Activities, including Day Habilitation or Community Mental Health**

Transportation usually reduces social distancing, so extra care must be taken before transporting recipients in Hope vehicles with staff who are not living with the recipient. The State of Alaska has also authorized many of these services to be delivered remotely or in the person's residence.

We encourage recipients to get out and receive fresh air and a change of scenery but before transporting, ask the following questions:

1. Can the service be provided in the home or neighborhood while maintaining social distance from others?
2. Is driving essential to providing the service?
3. If so, do you have the necessary PPE including face masks and gloves for yourself and the recipient?
4. Do you have supplies to disinfect the vehicle after returning from the outing?
5. Does the transportation meet a Day Habilitation goal in the person's Plan of Care?