

COMMUNITY FORUM Q&A

April 3, 2020 • 10:30 – 11:30 am

Due to technical problems, a transcript of this forum is not available. The answers to questions submitted and received via email by April 1, 2020, in preparation for the live discussion are listed below.

What does the Stay at Home order mean? Is it the same in DC as MD and VA?

The orders are very similar. You should remain at home unless you have to travel to an essential job. The orders in each respective jurisdiction has highlighted what businesses are essential. If you work for an essential business then you are cleared to go to work. Participating in social or cultural gatherings of a group of people is not recommended. There are also allowances for recreational activities, so long as you remain at least 6 feet away from others. Please remember the goal is to keep a safe social distance from others and to keep washing your hands.

At first they said only people who are sick should wear masks, now older people and younger people should use them, where do we go to get these? How do we know to properly wear them?

There is a lot of information that is being given from various sources, which may not always be correct. We urge you to get the latest information from coronavirus.dc.gov. The current guidelines does not recommend masks for anyone other than those who have contracted the virus.

April 27th this should be over and things will be rescheduled that were cancelled, how will we get those updates?

The current Mayoral order lasts until April 24th. Prior to the expiration of the order there will be updates on the effectiveness of this date. Please keep referring to updates that the agency or the District government releases.

How do we get our money with the COVID economic relief bill? How much should I expect to get?

Please refer to updates that are released by the United States Department of the Treasury via their official websites and social media outlets. Your provider will be able to assist you with accessing this information.

Once COVID closures open back up, will everything with DDS agencies be back to normal operations?

DDS continues to operate on a full-time basis, before the public emergency.



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Is there a curfew in place?

No, the Mayor of the District of Columbia has not issued a curfew order. There is a "stay-at-home" effect in place until further notice - where you must remain at home unless you have to travel for essential business / work. A curfew limits your activities at a certain time during the day/night on a daily basis.

If a policeman stops me, and they're not wearing a mask, will I get COVID?

There are instances where law enforcement may issue a traffic stop or engage a person that is out of their home to verify the reason why they are not home. Law enforcement will adhere to social distancing, where appropriate.

Can we limit temperature taking to once a week? Twice a day is over doing it and feels like more panic-mode.

I appreciate that this raises concerns for people, however, this is being done out of concern to ensure that residents and staff are and remain healthy. The goal here is to isolate any person who is showing symptoms, or may not have any symptoms, but may still be sick, from healthy individuals.

If someone does not have COVID, why are they quarantined? Are doctors making the right decisions for people, especially thinking about mental health concerns?

We are not being quarantined. We are all being asked to stay at home except for instances where we need to go out to go to the doctor, the grocery store, essential work, or other essential service. The ultimate goals of the orders issued are to promote social distancing. Yes, doctors are making the right decisions for the people served.

Are people supported by DDS involved in the decisions of how they are cared for during COVID?

Yes, DDS remains focused on a person-centered approach that involves decisions being made.

This is overboard, can we slow down?

Going overboard in this way is the Mayor and Governor of MD's way of slowing down the prevalence of COVID19. We are aiming to slow down the spread of the virus, quickly.



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Do we need to wear masks even if we don't have the vines? Do we have to wear them 24-hours? How about just a handkerchief?

Current DC Health guidelines limits the use of masks on a person who has COVID19.

Statement: Ricardo Thornton says keep up the good work with these forums!

Thank you.

More specifics with respect to DDS contingency plans for the likelihood of significant staffing shortages within the provider community.

Each provider has submitted their contingency plans to DDS and we will address issues with the appropriate people.

More specifics with respect to planning for the likely further spread of COVID-19 among people receiving any residential supports. Specifically, how is DDS collaborating with DC Health now to have a plan if/when an individual or a group of people in a residential placement tests positive for COVID-19 or needs to be tested? What quarantine protocols should be implemented by residential facilities when a resident or staff exhibits COVID-19 symptoms?

Of the 2400 people we support there has been 8 people with COVID19. DC Health has been reactive to discuss and implement plans with the people who have been diagnosed, and the people around them in appropriate planning moving forward.

What is included in the 1915(c) Appendix K and 1135 applications and when will those be submitted to CMS? Relatedly, is DDS exploring other Medicaid flexibility options that are available, for example 1115 and State Plan Amendments?

We will review these changes in the Provider 12pm call.

How is DDS handling communications and information with respect to ensuring that information about practical resources (e.g., people who will help pick up groceries in neighborhoods) and online activities (e.g., those included in the regularly updated DD Council list) are being disseminated and shared with DSPs and other caregivers?

This was something that was tasked to the Office of Disability Rights.