

It is important to report suspected, presumed and confirmed cases of COVID-19 occurring in Community Residential Programs to DSHS.

We are sympathetic to the impact this pandemic has had on community residential provider staff and resources. Thank you for your continued commitment to support people with disabilities through this unprecedented public health crisis.

It is critical for DSHS to gauge the spread of this illness in clients and staff within and across community residential providers. This allows DSHS to credibly advocate for resources, help mitigate the spread of the illness across programs, and to appropriately adjust service delivery and to allocate emergency funds. Below are the specific roles and responsibilities that have driven the need for reporting COVID-19:

Residential Care Services Role:

- **RCS:** In response to the COVID-19 epidemic the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) issued guidelines to regulatory entities to limit inspection, certification and investigation work to prioritize:
 - Complaints that constitute imminent danger or threat and allegations of abuse and neglect (and)
 - **Infection control concerns, including facilities with potential COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses**
 - See: [RCS Dear Provider Letter, 3-17-20](#) for more
- **RCS** is also playing a role for DSHS to determine the need for and assist with the distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Community Residential Service Providers. [RCS Dear Provider Letter, 4-6-20](#)
- **RCS** has also implemented efforts to help mitigate the spread of the coronavirus across community residential programs, statewide.

Developmental Disabilities Administration's Role:

- **DDA**, in partnership with ALISA and the Health Care Authority has requested and received amendments to waiver services to better accommodate staffing and service delivery impacts related to the coronavirus. For more link here: [COVID-19 Policy Changes, 3-18-20](#)
- **DDA** has received enhanced match through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act to support critical residential supports through this crisis. For more information link here: [Provider Temporary Rate Increase](#)
- **DDA** is tracking suspected, presumed and confirmed COVID-19 cases across DDA in an effort to:
 - Better inform service needs and planning
 - Appropriately allocate resources
 - And to inform education and outreach efforts

Note: As with any reporting expectation please use reasonable judgement with reporting. For example, it may not be necessary to immediately report to DSHS a case of a staff calling in with a minor cough who showed no signs or symptom of illness while working in a home or with clients. In a case like this it makes sense to check in with staff the following days and assess the severity of symptoms and report when it's clear the staff is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19. In all cases, monitor both clients and staff, and quarantine staff from homes when staff report any COVID symptoms.