

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

Dear Residential Services and Support Partners,

Thank you for your continued commitment to support people with disabilities through this unprecedented public health crisis.

DSHS needs your participation and assistance to gauge the spread of COVID-19 in clients and staff within and across community residential providers. Reporting to DSHS allows us to credibly advocate for resources, help mitigate the spread of the illness across programs, appropriately adjust service delivery and 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 and agencies with potential COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses**
 - See: [RCS Dear Provider Letter, 3-17-20](#) for details
- **RCS** is playing a central 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 COVID-19 across community residential programs, statewide.

Developmental Disabilities Administration's Role:

- **DDA**, in partnership with ALTSA 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 in an effort to:
 - Better inform service needs and planning
 - Appropriately allocate resources
 - And to inform education and outreach efforts

Note: We ask that you 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 may be logical to check in with staff on 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-19 symptoms.