

COVID-19 Training

Illness occurs when a person is infected with a harmful microorganism such as bacteria, virus, fungi, or protozoa. COVID-19 is a dangerous respiratory illness that is caused by infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Each of us should do our part to correctly report and stop the spread of this illness.

Staff and client/consumer/families must monitor for signs and symptoms of illness each day and prior to scheduled shifts. If you or a person you live with begin having signs and symptoms of illness, do not go to your scheduled shift and immediately notify your direct supervisor. Additionally, notify the client/consumer you serve that you will not be able to work until you receive clearance from your supervisor. If you discover that you have been in close contact (within 6 feet for a period of 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before the person began feeling sick until the time the patient was isolated) with a person who is under investigation for (being tested) or is confirmed to have COVID-19, immediately contact your direct supervisor and do not work until you have received clearance from your supervisor.

In the event the client/consumer you serve or a person who lives with them begins having signs and symptoms of illness, report this information to your direct supervisor immediately, prior to going to a scheduled shift. This will allow the agency to work together with staff and client/consumer/family, as a team, to prevent the spread of illness. If signs or symptoms of illness develop during a scheduled shift, immediately notify your direct supervisor. The Occupational Health team will provide guidance on next steps, to maintain the health and safety of employees and clients/consumers/family members.

Each of the below list of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 must be reported:

- Congestion/runny or stuffy nose
- Fever (temperature of 100* F or greater)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Nausea/vomiting
- Sore throat
- Muscle pain and fatigue
- Chills
- New loss of taste or smell

Please note: There are signs and symptoms of COVID-19 which do not typically present with other upper respiratory infections. These include nausea/vomiting, loss of taste and/or smell, and diarrhea.

Staff and client/consumers are also required to report any out of state travel immediately, prior to staff returning to work. Hot spots are rapidly changing, along with travel requirements and restrictions. Out of state travel will be addressed individually and will adhere to regulations/guidance.

Hand hygiene is one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness and infection. Hand hygiene means cleaning your hands by using either handwashing (washing with soap and water), antiseptic hand rub (i.e. alcohol-based hand sanitizer), or surgical antiseptics.

Either the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer or washing with soap and water should be performed:

- Immediately before touching a client/consumer
- Prior to meal preparation/assistance
- Before moving from work on a soiled body site to a clean body site on the same patient
- After touching a client/consumer or the client's/consumer's immediate environment
- Immediately before and after glove removal

Wash with Soap and Water:

- When hands are visibly soiled
- After caring for a person with known or suspected infectious diarrhea
- After contact with blood, body fluids or contaminated surfaces
- After using the bathroom

Staff must wear a mask when providing direct care for a client/consumer with whom they do not reside. Staff should strive to maintain a 6-foot distance from individuals with whom they do not reside. Coughs and sneezes should be covered with a tissue or the elbow. After coughing/sneezing or blowing their nose, hands should be washed using correct hand hygiene and use hand sanitizer if available.

In the event staff is quarantined or removed from work, a return to work screening questionnaire must be completed with their direct supervisor and clearance must be received from the Occupational Health team, prior to staff returning to work.