



POLICIES & PROCEDURES DURING COVID-19

These policies and procedures are heavily derived from guidance documents produced by the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), however, in many instances they have been supplemented or modified to reflect the needs of the participants that are served by congregate day programs in the state of New Jersey.

Dear PrimeTime Center Family,

I hope this finds everyone in our family safe and well. Included in this manual are updated protocols and procedures that all PrimeTime Center locations are taking to help ensure the safest environment possible. Considering best practice measures, formal guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Health, as well as the Department of Human Services and our partners at the Division of Developmental Disabilities, this manual contains the measures which PTC will take upon its phased reopening in 2021. Please note that all policies/procedures in this manual must be strictly followed by everyone, including those who recently tested positive for COVID-19 and/or those who have received a COVID-19 vaccine. Any PTC participants not able to adhere to the protocols listed in this document may not be able to attend.

As the choice of participating, or not participating, in congregate day services during these unusual times is not a one size fits all decision, the safety and comfort level of PrimeTime Center participants is our top priority. As you read through this information understand that the health and safety of everyone involved with PrimeTime Center is paramount. We want to ensure our stakeholders that we continue to take all concerns regarding this crisis extremely seriously. As reopening continues, PrimeTime Center will be taking on tremendous responsibility for ensuring the well-being of participants in an environment in which risks continue to be significantly higher and more complex than they were pre-pandemic. It is important to note that, even with prudent steps being taken to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection, neither PrimeTime Center nor DDD can guarantee that COVID-19 transmission will not occur.

As we also have seen, information pertaining to COVID-19 is constantly changing. PrimeTime Center will continue to review additional guidance as it is made available to us and will contact everyone with updated information and/or recommendations for further measures, should they become necessary. In order to keep stakeholders up to date and informed on all plans regarding PrimeTime Center operations and emergency protocols, PTC will regularly share updates and changes via:

- Program website www.primetimecenter.org
- Email
- Social Media
- Zoom Parent Meetings

If you have any questions or concerns about information in this document or any other topic pertaining to COVID-19, please contact your program supervisor. We truly welcome any questions or suggestions you may have. Your patience and cooperation are appreciated as we begin to see light at the end of the tunnel and hope that a full unmitigated return to program is in our near future.

Stay Safe & Stay Well.

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DDD DAY PROGRAM OPENING/REOPENING CRITERIA

New Jersey's restart and recovery is guided by data, improvements in public health, and the capacity to safeguard the public. As a result of improvements across these measures, congregate day programs are currently permitted to open at 100% capacity, not superseding social distancing guidelines. Opening, reopening and capacity levels are no longer tied to the weekly COVID-19 ACTIVITY LEVEL INDEX (CALI).

ADMITTANCE & SCREENING

All PTC participants and staff, regardless of vaccination status, must be screened daily for fever and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to entry to the program. The daily screening questionnaire may be completed and submitted on our webpage, each morning an individual will be onsite at one of our locations. If an individual fails the admission screening they will be advised to contact a health professional to set up an evaluation for COVID-19. If a fever greater than 100.3 and other symptoms were present during the screening, PrimeTime Center will require a negative test for Covid-19 and a doctor's note before their return. **All positive COVID-19 diagnosis should be reported to the program supervisor immediately.**

Admission screenings will include questions regarding symptoms/exposure to COVID-19 and temperature checks using temporal thermometers. All thermometers will be sanitized between uses and a record of all screenings will be maintained. Administrative staff or their designees will sign in each staff member and participant upon entry to their building, document temperature checks and survey individuals for warning signs of COVID-19. **Caregivers should be on the lookout for signs of illness and should keep participants home when they are sick.** A record of all screenings will be stored at each location.

- All PTC staff will be screened outside before entering the building. In case of inclement weather staff will be screened in the inside foyer. Staff are instructed to socially distance at least six feet apart as they await their turn for screening. Staff that have a temperature greater than 100.3 degrees or other signs of illness shall not be admitted into the building.
- All PTC participants that are transported by PTC will be screened before entering PTC vehicles. All PTC participants must give a signed/dated PTC screening questionnaire to the driver before entering the vehicle (page 6). Participants that have a temperature greater than 100.3 degrees or other signs of illness shall not be admitted into the vehicle.
- All PTC participants that are transported in non PTC vehicles will be screened either in their vehicle or outside before entering the building. In case of inclement weather participants will be screened in the inside foyer. Participants are instructed to socially distance at least six feet apart as they await their turn for screening. All PTC participants must have a signed/dated screening questionnaire in order to be admitted into the building (page 5). Participants that have a temperature greater than 100.3 degrees or other signs of illness shall not be admitted into the building. ** If the vehicle they were transported in is not able to return them home, PTC participants will wait in a designated isolation space for caregiver pick-up, which must occur within 60 minutes of notification.

*** When a temperature reading greater than 100.3 is recorded, an individual will have their temperature immediately retaken to confirm the reading. If the temperature remains above 100.3, the individual will be allowed five minutes to cool down before a third temperature reading is taken. If the third temperature reading remains higher than 100.3, the individual will not be allowed to enter the building. If the third temperature reading is below 100.3, a fourth temperature reading must be given to confirm the previous reading. With confirmation the individual may enter the building.*

Individuals attending PrimeTime Center in-person who meet the following criteria before or during screening, or develop these symptoms after starting day program, will be promptly isolated and excluded from PTC facilities for at least 10 days from symptom onset, **OR** until they receive an alternate diagnosis from a healthcare provider **OR** a negative COVID-19 test result. **If a caregiver identifies these symptoms they shall follow this guidance and not send the person to day program:**

- At least two of the following symptoms: fever, chills, shivers, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose; **OR**
- At least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new smell disorder and/or new taste disorder

This guidance has been adapted from the New Jersey Department of Health COVID-19 Guidance for Reopening Childcare and was adopted by DDD on October 29, 2020.

Visitation within each center will be strictly limited during operating hours with the exception of those that are essential to operations, emergency medical services in their official capacity or personnel from the Department of Human Services or Division of Developmental Disabilities. With the exception of an emergency situation, all visitors shall be required to undergo screening prior to entry and will be required to wear a face covering and maintain proper social distancing at all times. Any visitors that have a temperature greater than 100.3 degrees or show other signs of illness shall not be admitted into the building. All visitors allowed to enter will be required to wear a face covering. If a visitor refuses to wear a face covering they will be denied entry into PrimeTime Center. Routine or Annual meetings with support coordinators will take place virtually until further notice.

COVID-19 Daily Screening Questionnaire

1. In the past 24 hours, have you experienced any of the following symptoms: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

YES ☐

NO ☐

2. Have you had a temperature greater than 100.3 degrees within the past 24 hours?

YES ☐

NO ☐

3. In the past 14 days have you been in close contact with anyone who has tested positive for

COVID-19? *(Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of an infected individual for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset until the time the individual is isolated and/or having direct contact with the infectious secretions of an individual with laboratory confirmed COVID-19.)*

Please note that if close contact was solely due to continuing care for an infected individual in the residence or other healthcare setting and appropriate PPE was worn during that encounter, answering yes to this question does not preclude a staff person from working unless they exhibit symptoms. *(This question is not applicable to fully vaccinated PTC staff unless they are immunocompromised.)*

YES ☐

NO ☐

4. If you are unvaccinated, within the past 14 days have you travelled outside of New Jersey beyond the immediate region of New York, Pennsylvania, or Delaware? *(An individual is considered to be fully vaccinated two or more weeks after having received the final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. Unvaccinated individuals should quarantine for 10 days after travel. If an unvaccinated individual receives a negative viral (PCR) test 3-5 days after they travel, they will need to quarantine for 7 days after travel.)*

YES ☐

NO ☐

HEALTH & SAFETY

All PrimeTime Center locations will be open from 9a.m to 3p.m. at 100% capacity, or the number of individuals that can be served while maintaining social distancing (six feet apart) requirements, whichever is less. Procedures shall be implemented to prevent crowding at pick up and drop off times to prohibit an excess number of people in any entry vestibule/pick up area in excess of the number that can be accommodated with at least 6 feet of distance between persons. Parents and transportation providers will not be allowed into any PTC program during this time.

PrimeTime Center will maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol based hand sanitizer in every classroom, at designated entrances/exits and other locations throughout each building. Although PrimeTime Center will have hand sanitizer widely available throughout each of the program buildings, participants are encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer while attending program. All hand sanitizer should contain at least 60% alcohol content. PrimeTime Center staff/participants will be required to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds at regular intervals throughout the day including upon arrival, before eating, after spending time outside, after using the bathroom and after blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing. If hand washing with soap and water is not possible, hand sanitizer should be used.

All PTC staff members and participants, regardless of vaccination status, shall be required to wear face coverings that cover their nose and mouth when entering any PTC program. Upon arrival participants will immediately be directed to classrooms/workstations rather than congregate in a common area. Floor markings, physical partitions and other safeguards will be used as necessary. All PTC participants will continue to be grouped into cohorts upon arrival and will remain with that cohort for the entire day. PTC staff shall be assigned to work with a cohort and will remain with that cohort for the entire day. These steps will help with contact tracing in the event of a potential COVID-19 positive case. Groups shall not congregate less than 10 feet in all directions from other groups while in shared spaces. All PTC emergency procedures will be appropriately adjusted in order to maintain 6ft of social distancing.

If all PTC participants and staff grouped together in their daily cohort/room are fully vaccinated, those individuals will not have to remain socially distant and may choose to remove their face coverings. If any PTC cohort/room contains one or more individuals that are not fully vaccinated, all staff and participants who are able must wear a face covering and socially distance. Exceptions to wearing a face covering include: doing so would inhibit the individual's health, an individual will be in extreme heat outdoors, an individuals documented medical condition or disability as reflected in their ISP precludes the use of face coverings. Individuals should wash their hands before putting on a face covering and/or after taking it off. Touching the front of a face covering should be avoided. Face shields are not a substitute for face coverings. If a PTC participant does wear a face shield because they cannot tolerate a face covering, it should wrap around their face and extend below the chin.

Fully vaccinated PTC participants can elect not to wear a mask when outdoors. Fully vaccinated PTC staff may do the same if the daily group they are working with are fully vaccinated.

Use of shared spaces (entry ways, hall ways, restrooms, etc.) shall be carefully controlled to ensure that PTC participants and staff maintain at least 6 feet of separation. **Face coverings will continue to be worn in any common areas of a PTC facility including the reception area, hallways, bathrooms, etc.**

Until further notice all meals and snacks will continue to be eaten in the classroom or area where groups are regularly situated to avoid congregating in large groups. PTC participants will be required to bring in all snacks and meals from home. **When possible, meals and snacks shall not be heat ups.** PTC staff will also bring in all snacks and meals from home, external food deliveries will not be allowed for the foreseeable future. All mealtimes will be staggered to avoid congestion in communal areas. When staff are handling food, gloves must be worn and there should not be contact with food surfaces. The use of disposables such as plates, cups and utensils are deemed a best practice. Meal areas should be cleaned after use.

One cohort per day may be located in our kitchen area. That cohort may be allowed to use our kitchen facilities to make snacks/meals. When PTC participants and staff are handling food, gloves must be worn and there should not be contact with food surfaces. The use of disposables such as plates, cups and utensils are deemed a best practice. Meal areas as well as kitchen appliances must be thoroughly cleaned after every use.

Field trips and other off-site activities are permissible with guardian approval, as long as the designated venue has been cleared to open by a Governor's Executive Order. CDC guidelines related to social distancing shall be maintained and masking may be required depending on the venue type. Field trips are best if they are within walking distance of the facility. **If transportation is necessary for a field trip, all occupants of PTC vehicles must wear a face covering while in the vehicle.** Documentation of outings must be maintained by the supervisor and shall include at a minimum:

- Date
- Names of all staff/participants attending
- Name & Address of venue
- Arrival and Departure Time

Sharing of food, supplies, and other high touch items will be limited. Centers shall ensure adequate activity supplies to limit the need for sharing of items. Belongings shall be kept separate and sent home each day for washing. If items must be shared they shall only be used by one group at a time and will be disinfected between uses. Disinfecting items used will become a regular part of most ADL lessons.

All PTC programs will ensure adequate ventilation in each facility, including operational heating and ventilation systems. All systems use recirculated air and have a fresh air component. All air filters were recently changed in accordance with manufacturer recommendations and will be maintained on a regular basis. When weather conditions allow, each PrimeTime Center location will increase fresh outdoor air by opening windows and doors. Ventilation considerations will also be implemented during transportation when weather allows.

TRANSPORTATION

DDD has recommended that transportation to and from day service settings be provided by caretakers for individuals living in their own homes and residential staff for individuals living in a residential setting, if the provider is not able to meet social distancing standards within their vehicles. Unfortunately, the need for transportation may limit the ability for individuals to attend day services at the point in which they are ready to do so.

PrimeTime Center will provide limited transportation to and from program in the safest manner possible to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. PTC Drivers, regardless of vaccination status, will wear face coverings at all times and will screen all participants prior to boarding any PTC vehicle. As recommended by DDD, the number of participants in the vehicle may be limited to maintain social distancing for those participants that are not yet vaccinated. **All participants being transported in PrimeTime Center vehicles, regardless of vaccination status, will need to wear a face covering.** Cleaning protocols for all PrimeTime Center vehicles can be found in the next section.

If an individual is using private transportation to be transported to and from a facility, it is up to the individual/caregiver to make sure that proper measures are in place with the transportation company to keep everyone on the vehicle safe. Participants utilizing private transportation companies that are not taking the proper measures to keep them safe may be denied access to a PrimeTime Center facility.

CLEANING & DISINFECTING

PrimeTime Center has upgraded our cleaning processes to comply with CDC guidance and has developed a daily schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfecting. Routine cleaning is the everyday cleaning practices that businesses normally use to maintain a healthy environment. Cleaning does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces. By killing germs on a surface after cleaning it can further lower the risk of spreading infection. A thorough cleaning of each facility will occur every evening. The risk of exposure to cleaning staff is inherently low. Cleaning staff should wear disposable gloves for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash. Cleaning staff and others should clean hands often, including immediately after removing gloves and after contact with an ill person, by washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.

PrimeTime Center shall clean, sanitize and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects such as door handles, light switches, sink handles, etc. multiple times per day. Cleaning shall be in accordance with the CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting public spaces. Disinfecting methods shall utilize EPA approved disinfectants for use against Covid-19. For the protection of themselves and others, PTC participants and staff are expected to clean their workspace with the cleaning materials supplied at each location. Any shared objects/equipment shared between two entities will be properly cleaned and disinfected after each use. Items that individuals have

placed in their mouth shall be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a staff member wearing gloves. These objects will be cleaned with water and detergent, rinsed, sanitized with disinfectant and will air dry.

All PTC staff will be required to document the wiping down of frequently touched surfaces in their classroom/work area a minimum of three times daily including an initial cleaning before participants enter the building. Areas to be cleaned include light switches, door knobs, desk tops, cabinet handles, computer equipment, chair tops, etc. A check off sheet must be completed by all staff members including the date/time each are is cleaned.

How to Clean and Disinfect

Hard (Non-porous) Surfaces: If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products for concentration, application method and contact time, etc.

Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions (at least 1000ppm sodium hypochlorite) can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application, ensuring a contact time of at least 1 minute, and allowing proper ventilation during and after application. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Prepare a bleach solution by mixing: 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

Soft (Porous) Surfaces: For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. After cleaning: If the items can be laundered, launder items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and then dry items completely. Otherwise, use products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 and that are suitable for porous surfaces.

Electronics: For electronics such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines, remove visible contamination if present. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products. Consider use of wipe able covers for electronics. If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

Linens, Clothing, and Other Laundered Items: In order to minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air, do not shake dirty laundry. Wash items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items. Clean and disinfect hampers or other carts for transporting laundry according to guidance above for hard or soft surfaces.

Regardless of vaccination status, staff must wear proper PPE when providing physical assistance for an individual's personal care needs. The PPE shall be changed after caring for an individual's personal care need like toileting. PTC staff can protect themselves by wearing a disposable gown or smock and by wearing long hair up off the collar. All clothes must be changed if there are secretions on it and staff shall wash their hands after changing. Staff shall change the individual's clothes if secretions are on the individual's clothes. All contaminated clothes should be safely contained and stored in a plastic bag or safely contained and transported to the laundry area to be washed in the washing machine. Areas and equipment used during assistance with personal care needs shall be cleaned and sanitized after each use.

PRIMETIME CENTER MANDATED CLEANING PROTOCOL

To assist in making sure we are cleaning areas efficiently and frequently, each PTC staff member must begin a specific daily routine of cleaning frequently touched surfaces in the classroom or work area that they are supervising. Using either EPA approved cleaning wipes or paper towels and the EPA approved professional cleaning product available, you can spray surfaces directly, or apply them to a paper towel to wipe down areas. All staff must do an initial cleaning of surfaces when they arrive, before participants enter the area. We are then asking that staff clean surfaces again after lunch as well as at the end of each day. This protocol will help supplement the cleaning being done by our building cleaning personnel. Below is a schedule so staff can document each time cleaning is done. Please check off each surface that is cleaned and record the time in the final box. These sheets will be collected each day and signed off by program administration. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Surfaces that need frequent cleaning: Light switches, All Doorknobs, including the one outside your door, Computer mice and computer desk areas, Desk tops, Chairs, Classroom phone, Handles of classroom cabinets, Edges and back of any tablets (please don't put cleaning products on technology screens), Writing Tools, Supply Bins, Any other surfaces that can be safely cleaned

Doorknobs	Light Switches	Cabinet Handles	Computers Tablets	Desk Tops	Chairs	Phone	Writing Tools	Bins	Time

PRIMETIME CENTER MANDATED VEHICLE CLEANING PROTOCOL

To assist in making sure we are cleaning areas efficiently and frequently, each PTC driver must begin a specific daily routine of cleaning frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle that they are driving. Using either EPA approved cleaning wipes or paper towels and the EPA approved professional cleaning product available, you can spray surfaces directly, or apply them to a paper towel to wipe down areas. Drivers must do a cleaning of all frequently touched surfaces at the conclusion of each use. Each PTC vehicle in use will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected at the end of each day. All PTC drivers shall wear disposable gloves while cleaning PTC vehicles. Below is a schedule so drivers can document each time cleaning is done. Please check off each surface that is cleaned and record the time in the final box. These sheets will be collected each day and signed off by program administration. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Surfaces that need frequent cleaning: Door handles, Door locks, Steering Wheel, Seat belts, Arm rests, Wiper/Turn signal levers, Shift lever, Radio, Climate controls, Center console, Cup holders, Vents, Rearview mirror, Clipboard, Pen, Keys, Any other surfaces that can be safely cleaned

Door Handles and Locks	Visors And Air Vents	Steering Wheel	Seat Belts	Arm Rests	Wiper / Turn Signal Levers	Shift Lever	Rear View Mirror	Radio/ Climate Controls	Center Console Cup Holders	Clipboard And Pen	Time

How to Clean and Disinfect after a suspected/confirmed case of Covid-19 in a PTC facility

If there is a suspected/confirmed case of Covid-19 in a PrimeTime Center building, the facility along with the County Health Department, will consider implementing a short term closure, regardless of community spread. All areas should immediately be closed off if visited by the ill person. Open outside doors and windows and/or use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area. Wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfecting procedures. Staff should clean and disinfect all areas used by the ill person following the procedures listed above, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces. Staff and participants can return to the area immediately after disinfection is complete.

Cleaning and Disinfecting of PTC vehicles

PrimeTime Center will ensure that cleaning and disinfecting procedures are followed consistently and correctly, including the provision of adequate ventilation when chemicals are in use. Doors and windows should remain open when cleaning the vehicle. When cleaning and disinfecting staff will wear disposable gloves compatible with the cleaners being used.

PrimeTime Center will clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces, such as door handles, at the end of each run. For hard non-porous surfaces within the interior of the vehicle such as hard seats, armrests, door handles seat belt buckles, etc. detergent or soap and water will be used if the surfaces are visibly dirty, prior to disinfectant application. For disinfection of hard, non-porous surfaces, staff will use EPA appropriate disinfectants and will follow the manufacturer's instructions for concentration, application method and contact time. For soft or porous surfaces such as fabric seats, staff will clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surface. Staff will clean frequently touched electronic surfaces, such as touch screens, with alcohol based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect. Each PTC vehicle in use will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected at the end of each day.

All PTC staff shall wear disposable gloves while cleaning PTC vehicles. Gloves and any other disposable PPE used for cleaning and disinfecting the vehicle will be removed and disposed of when cleaning has ended. Staff will wash their hands immediately after removal of gloves and PPE with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

EXPOSURE/REPORTING

The health of PTC participants, staff and families is always a top priority. PrimeTime Center is closely monitoring all updates regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) and the New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services. **We currently ask all PTC staff and participants, regardless of vaccination status, to stay home if they are not feeling well. If PTC staff/participants that are not fully vaccinated have been exposed or come into close contact (CDC defines close contact as a person that has been within six feet of an infected person for 15 or more cumulative minutes within 24-hours) with a person diagnosed with Covid-19, they should immediately report that information to the program supervisor and begin a self-quarantine for a period of 14 days.**

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all staff and participants, PrimeTime Center has put the following guidelines in place to handle any reports of a positive Covid-19 test result in a manner that protects all stakeholders confidentially, minimizing risk to others and maximizing business continuity. At all times, measures will be taken to prevent transmission of the virus. Such measures include social distancing, physical barriers, PPE, hand washing and a comprehensive system of cleaning and disinfecting. Privacy will be protected to the greatest extent possible.

If a PTC participant or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at a PrimeTime Center facility (e.g. fever of 100.4 or higher, cough, shortness of breath), regardless of vaccination status, they will immediately be separated from everyone until they are able to

leave the facility. A designated space will be used for the individual to wait in isolation. PTC staff waiting with that individual should remain as far away as safely possible from the individual (preferably, 6 feet). If symptoms persist or worsen, PTC staff should call a health care provider for further guidance. The caregiver picking the individual up shall be advised to contact a healthcare professional and have them evaluated for COVID-19. **If the individual presented with a fever greater than 100.3 and other symptoms, PrimeTime Center will require a negative test for COVID-19 and a doctor's note before they are able to return.** Any symptomatic individual shall inform their program supervisor immediately if the person is diagnosed with COVID-19.

Any areas and equipment used by a symptomatic individual will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with CDC guidance referenced above. PTC facilities uncertain about the extent of potential exposure shall clean and sanitize all rooms and equipment.

Any program supervisor made aware of a Covid-19 positive case in their facility will contact their local health department for guidance as well as notify staff and participants/caregivers of a positive case, if they have been in close contact (within 6 feet for 15 cumulative minutes or more) with that person. Health officials will provide direction on whether a center should cease operations following the identification of a positive case in the facility.

Middlesex County Office of Health Services
35 Kennedy Boulevard
East Brunswick NJ 08816
(732) 745-3100

Monmouth County Health Department
50 east Main Street
Freehold NJ 07728
(732) 431-7456

Ocean County Health Department
175 Sunset Avenue
Toms River NJ 08754-2191
(800) 342-9738
(732)341-9700 ext 7616 (Donna – Brick Area)

The following requirements are currently in effect for reporting Covid-19 related events involving DDD programs and individuals. PrimeTime Center shall report any of the following as a Medical event (communicable disease):

- An individual receiving DHS services is confirmed positive for COVID-19.
- An agency employee was in direct contact with an individual receiving services from DHS in the past 14 days, and the employee is confirmed positive for COVID-19.

- Medical – Communicable Disease – especially in the event of a positive COVID 19 diagnosis must be reported within the same business day of the occurrence.
- Operational incidents related to COVID 19 involving program closure, emergency relocation, shelter in place or a continuity of operations plan (COOP) must be reported within the same business day of the occurrence.

For any reportable event listed above, PrimeTime Center is required to ensure all identified participants/guardians are appropriately notified, in keeping with DHS policies for ensuring notification and confidentiality.

Department and Division staff (Critical Incident Management Unit—CIMU, DDD Office of Risk Management—ORM, DDD Facility Quality Assurance Staff—QA, and DMHAS QA) are available by email or phone to assist with questions and concerns for matters related to incident reporting, per the following contact information:

*DDD Office of Risk Management (ORM)/IR (Incident Report) Unit Supervisor
Ivy Lipton: 609-633-7782 ORM Fax: 609-341-2343 | Email: DDD-CRL.UIRS@dhs.state.nj.us
Counties Served: Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Sussex, Warren*

Critical Incident Management Unit (CIMU) Supervisor Contacts: Keith Joslin, Supervisor: 609-292-4482 (DDD Community)

Incident Verification Unit: Annette Cavallaro, Chief: 609-984-5479

*DDD CIMU Admin Review: dhs.cimadmin@dhs.nj.gov Fax number: 609-777-2082
DMHAS CIMU Admin Review: dhs.mhscimadmin@dhs.nj.gov Fax number: 609-341-226*

Re-Admittance

If a PTC staff member or participant is excluded for any COVID-19 symptoms and it has been determined that they have not had any close contact exposure, they may return to their facility according to the following guidelines:

- 24 hours fever free with no use of fever reducing medications **AND**
- Symptoms continue to improve **AND**
- 10 days after start of first symptoms **OR** a doctor's clearance stating the symptoms are otherwise explained

When a PTC staff member and/or participant contracts COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, they cannot return to their facility until the CDC time based strategy for lifting transmission based precautions and home isolation have been met. **All individuals returning to program are required to have a doctor's note clearing them to return to program.**

The time-based strategy for those who have COVID-19 requires:

- 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without use of fever reducing medication
AND
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
AND
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared or since first positive COVID-19 viral diagnostic test if individual has remained asymptomatic

Fully vaccinated PTC staff/participants who have been exposed to COVID-19 and who are asymptomatic do not need to be restricted from work for 14 days following their exposure. Additionally, those asymptomatic staff/participants who have recovered from a COVID19-infection in the prior 3 months should follow the same guidance. Restrictions for fully vaccinated staff with exposure who have underlying immunocompromising conditions, or staff/participants who have not been vaccinated, must isolate for 14 days following an exposure. (At this time, people are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 two or more weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or two or more weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen).

VIRTUAL SERVICES

Beginning Monday, July 5, 2021 all PrimeTime Center locations will discontinue their virtual services offerings. With the current staffing shortage as well as a return to in-person services at 100% capacity, all PTC locations will focus their attention on offering in-person services at this time. If a PrimeTime Center location is forced to shut down due to a health emergency, that location will pivot back to virtual services for the time being until the health emergency is lifted.

TRAINING & EDUCATION

All PrimeTime Center staff will be trained on all policies and procedures related to COVID-19 prior to re-opening of all program facilities. Training related to COVID-19 will detail facility considerations, operational considerations, social distancing considerations, infection control protocols, proper disinfection procedures, proper use of PPE, etc.

All PTC employees with reasonably anticipated occupational exposure to COVID-19 will be trained about the sources of exposure to the virus, the hazards associated with that exposure, and appropriate workplace protocols in place to prevent or reduce the likelihood of exposure. Training will include information about how to isolate individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 or other infectious diseases, and how to report possible cases. PTC staff required to use PPE will receive training which includes when to use PPE; what PPE is necessary; how to properly don (put on), use, and doff (take off) PPE; how to properly dispose of or disinfect, inspect for damage, and maintain PPE; and the limitations of PPE.

PrimeTime Center will also educate program participants on all policies and procedures related to COVID-19 upon reopening and will update participants on an ongoing basis after opening. Education related to COVID 19 will cover changes to our facilities, daily operations, social distancing, hygiene and infection control, communication and infection protocols and proper use of PPE.

PTC staff will teach and reinforce washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes among participants. They shall teach and reinforce use of cloth face coverings among participants and staff, where appropriate. Face coverings are most essential at times when social distancing is not possible. Participants will be frequently reminded not to touch their face covering and to wash their hands frequently.

PTC participants shall practice frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and shall be required to wash their hands upon arriving at the center, when entering the classroom, before meals or snacks, after outside time, after going to the bathroom, and prior to leaving for home.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

The Division of Developmental Disabilities has released several documents so that each PTC participant can make an informed choice about returning to in-person day services. For information about the spread of COVID-19 and ways to reduce risk, please review the attached **Receipt of COVID-19 Information Form** (a signature is not required at this time). For information about the latest DOH and DDD guidance please read the attached **Congregate Day Program Re-opening Requirements**. Both documents contain helpful information related to the spread, exposure, risk and prevention of COVID-19.

PRIMETIME CENTER COVID -19 POLICY SIGN OFF

My signature acknowledges that I have read the PrimeTime Center COVID-19 Policy and Procedure Manual and understand its contents. All of my questions and concerns have been addressed by PrimeTime Center administration.

Signature of PrimeTime Center Staff Member

Date

Signature of PrimeTime Center Participant

Date

Signature of Guardian/Caregiver

Date



Congregate Day Program Re-Opening Requirements EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

June 16, 2021

Introduction

Congregate day programs - including programs for persons with Traumatic Brain Injury - are directed to reopen at full capacity if all criteria contained in this document are met. Given the present staffing shortages, providers will need time to obtain enough staff to operate at full capacity. Further, providers of day services for medically involved persons may elect to limit capacity for a period of time before moving to full enrollment and or enact additional protocols based on the health needs of participants.

It is important to note that, even with prudent steps being taken to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection, neither the day program provider nor the Division can guarantee that transmission of COVID-19, or one of its variants, will not occur. Individuals, families/guardians, and providers must monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. If an individual is positive for COVID-19 or unvaccinated/not fully vaccinated* and has been exposed to COVID-19, they are not permitted to attend a day program until cleared by a medical professional.

Providers are permitted to inquire about vaccination status of participants, visitors and staff so long as they follow all privacy requirements and are in compliance with HIPAA protections, (e.g., do not ask the status in front of other others) and any other applicable federal or state laws. Visitors are not required to provide this information. If vaccination status is unknown then it is to be assumed that the person is not vaccinated. Providers may establish their own policies regarding staff vaccination.

*People are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 ≥ 2 weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or ≥ 2 weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen).

Background Rationale and Evidence for Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People¹

COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized in the United States are effective against COVID-19, including severe disease. Preliminary evidence suggests that the currently authorized COVID-19 vaccines may provide some protection against a variety of SARS-CoV-2 strains. A growing body of evidence suggests that fully vaccinated people are less likely to have asymptomatic infection and potentially less likely to transmit COVID-19 to others. Further investigation is ongoing.

The risks of COVID-19 infection in fully vaccinated people cannot be completely eliminated as long as there is continued community transmission of the virus. Vaccinated people could potentially still get COVID-19 and spread it to others. At this time, there is limited data on vaccine protection in people who are immunocompromised. People with immunocompromising conditions, including those taking immunosuppressive medications, should discuss the need for personal protective measures after vaccination with their healthcare provider.

Ventilation

The facility shall ensure proper ventilation as follows:

- Make sure indoor spaces are well-ventilated (for example, open windows or doors when doing so does not pose a safety or health risk to building occupants) and large enough to accommodate physical distancing.
- Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible both in the facility as well as any vehicles used by the facility.
- Consider improving the engineering controls using the building ventilation system.
- Facilities shall ensure that HVAC systems continue to be maintained and operational.
- To the extent practicable, windows should be opened frequently to allow fresh air flow, and HVAC systems should be adjusted to allow for more fresh air to enter the facility.

Screening and Admittance

All individuals, staff, contracted professionals, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, must be cleared for admittance

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/fully-vaccinated-people.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fmore%2Ffully-vaccinated-people.html

to the facility through screening, including temperature checks, as outlined in the [Residential and Day Program Screening Policy](#). The only exception to required screening is for first responders entering the program. Providers should make employee and participant health screenings as private as possible to protect health information as well as prevent stigma and discrimination.

In all instances, screening must occur in an accessible designated area that accommodates physical distancing and infection control standards. This may be an area outdoors or in the immediate entryway of the facility. Indoor screening areas must be separated from the program facility by walls or physical barriers. Outdoor screening areas must be sheltered to allow utilization during inclement weather. In-vehicle screening is permissible. Screening for fever and signs of COVID-19 also must occur before entry onto an agency vehicle during pick up. The driver or other program staff can deny transportation to a day program if an individual is demonstrating symptoms. A record of all screenings shall be maintained.

Face Coverings, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and Physical Distancing

All staff, regardless of vaccination status, must continue to wear a well-fitted face mask when working, unless doing so would create a risk to workplace health, safety or job duty as assessed by the employer, and physically distance (as appropriate for the care of residents) when working with participants and other staff.

If all participants and staff in a group are fully vaccinated, participants and staff may choose to remove their mask and may have close contact with others in the group without a mask.

If a group contains one or more unvaccinated staff or participant, ALL staff in the group MUST mask and socially distance from unvaccinated persons as appropriate for the care of the participant(s). Participants in the group *who are able* MUST wear a well-fitted face mask and unvaccinated participants should physically distance from others in the group.

If vaccination status cannot be determined for all group participants, the safest practice is for all participants to follow all recommended infection prevention and control practices including maintaining physical distancing and wearing a well-fitted face mask.

Fully vaccinated program participants can elect not to wear a mask when outdoors. Fully vaccinated staff can elect not to wear a mask when outdoors if the participants in the group they are working with are fully vaccinated.

All individual program participants who are not fully vaccinated shall be encouraged by the staff to wear a well-fitted face mask. This guidance recognizes that some individual program participants may not tolerate wearing face coverings or it may not be medically advisable for them to wear one. However, individual participants who are not fully vaccinated for whom it is not medically contraindicated should be encouraged to wear a well-fitted face mask which covers the nose and mouth within the facility and/or in the agency vehicle. Individual participants wearing face coverings should also be reminded frequently not to touch the face covering.

This guidance recognizes that some individuals who are not fully vaccinated may not understand the importance of physical distancing (being at least six feet apart while at day program) from those who they do not live with. However, individuals who are not fully vaccinated should be encouraged to physically distance to lessen COVID-19 exposure risk. Groups shall physically distance from other groups.

Promoting Healthy Hygiene Practices

Facilities shall teach and reinforce the practice of frequent and proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (e.g. covering coughs and sneezes²) among individuals and staff. Staff shall perform hand hygiene upon arriving at the facility, before entering their assigned area, before meals or snacks, after community outings or time spent outside, after going to the bathroom, and prior to leaving for home. Individuals are to be encouraged to do the same to the best of their ability and be monitored to ensure proper technique.

² www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html

Regardless of vaccination status, staff must wear proper PPE when providing physical assistance for an individual's personal care needs. This PPE shall be changed after caring for an individual's personal needs like toileting. PPE shall also be changed between working with different individuals needing personal care assistance. Special care should be taken when changing adult briefs as COVID-19 may be present in fecal matter³. Staff shall change the individual's clothes when soiled. All contaminated clothes should be safely contained and stored in a plastic bag or safely contained and transported to the laundry area (if available) and washed per policy and procedure. Areas and equipment used during assistance with personal care needs shall be cleaned and sanitized after each use.

Total Number of Individuals Served and Group Sizes

Group sizes shall no longer be limited but is recommended to be 15 or fewer individuals and that, to the extent practicable, that the same group composition be maintained. Each day, a record shall be maintained in the event it is needed for contact tracing that documents which individuals were in a group and the staff who worked with them. Groups shall have designated areas that are separated within the facility by walls or other physical partitions.

Day service providers shall ensure that in the event of inclement weather that if individuals on community outings return to the facility that it does not negatively impact the ability to maintain the aforementioned physical distancing.

Simultaneous use of outdoor activity space is permissible. Facilities are encouraged to partition available space to allow for increased outdoor activities. Prioritize outdoor activities over indoor activities when possible. Staff should ensure sun safety for all participants. Individuals and staff must wash their hands upon returning to the facility.

Transportation

Individuals (regardless of vaccination status) transported by the day services provider shall be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 prior to entering the vehicle and conduct temperature screen prior to entering the vehicle. The driver or other program staff can deny transportation to a day program if the individual is demonstrating symptoms. A record of all screenings shall be maintained.

The provider will provide transportation in the safest manner possible to reduce transmission of COVID-19. This includes having staff wear a well-fitted face mask and providing ventilation through the opening of windows and use of vehicle HVAC systems to circulate fresh air. Standard vehicle occupancy can be used. If all participants and staff on a vehicle are fully vaccinated, masking is not required. If one or more participants or staff on the vehicle are unvaccinated/not fully vaccinated/vaccination status unknown all participants who are able must wear a well-fitted face mask during the trip – especially those who are unvaccinated/not fully vaccinated/vaccination status unknown. In this circumstance, it is *recommended* that vehicle capacity be limited to one rider per row. The day program provider must make participants and their caretaker(s) aware of the risks associated with congregate transportation for unvaccinated/not fully vaccinated/persons with vaccination status unknown in relation to contracting COVID-19.

Transportation staff and drivers should practice all safety actions and protocols as indicated for other day program staff (e.g., hand hygiene, masks). Ensure each vehicle is equipped with cleaning and disinfecting supplies that are stored in a safe manner, readily accessible to only the driver and transportation staff. Commonly touched surfaces in the vehicle shall be cleaned and disinfected at the end of each run and the entire vehicle thoroughly cleaned after each round of pick up/drop off, especially after the last use of the day.

Visitation

Visitation in the center shall be limited during operating hours to those that are essential to operations (maintenance or repair services, prospective admissions, prospective employees, planning team meetings, etc.). Routine or annual meetings shall take place virtually when possible and appropriate. Exceptions remain for emergency medical services or law enforcement personnel acting in their official capacity, personnel from the Department of Human Services and/or Division of Developmental Disabilities visiting the facility. With the exception of an emergency medical services or law enforcement as described above, all visitors shall be required to undergo screening prior to entry and will be required to

³ www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Spread

wear a well-fitted face mask that covers the nose and mouth and maintain proper physical distancing at all times.

Activities

Activities that are likely to bring individuals who are unvaccinated/not fully vaccinated into close contact shall be limited. Community outings and other off-site activities may occur with guardian approval. Documentation of outings must be maintained by the provider and available for review which shall include: date of outing; name(s) of individual(s) attending; name(s) of staff attending; name and address of venue; and the arrival and departure time.

Response Procedures for COVID-19 Symptoms

Regardless of vaccination status, if an individual or staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19 at the facility immediately separate them from the others in an isolation area until they depart from the program. The program shall contact the individual's emergency contact and arrange for their transport home.

Facilities shall immediately notify their local health department of any confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 occurring in a day service center. Facilities shall also cooperate with their local health department related to any contact tracing that may be needed. After that notification, confirmed cases of COVID-19 must also be reported to the Division through established [Unusual Incident Reporting Procedures](#).

All rooms and equipment used by the sick person(s) shall be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with [CDC guidance](#).

Individuals or Staff Members Who Test Positive or Report Exposure to COVID-19

Facilities that become aware of a COVID-19 positive case or exposure at their facility shall contact their [local health department](#) to inquire if they should continue to operate or close. Additionally, the agency will be required to provide notification to their PPMU liaison via phone or email DDD.PPMU@dhs.nj.gov of positive staff and individuals as they become aware.

Health officials will provide direction on whether a center should cease operations following the identification of a positive case or exposure in the facility. The facility shall immediately inform individuals, guardians and staff if they have been in close contact (≥ 15 cumulative minutes within 24-hours) with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 while attending the day program.

All rooms and equipment used by the sick person(s) shall be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with [CDC guidance](#).

Returning to Program After COVID-19 Diagnosis or Exposure⁴

Regardless of vaccination status, if a staff member or participant tests positive for COVID-19, they cannot return until the criteria for lifting transmission based precautions and home isolation⁵ have been met **and** they have been cleared to end isolation by a healthcare professional. The facility may require a doctor's note before re-admission.

Fully vaccinated staff/participants who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and who are asymptomatic should not be restricted from work/program for 14 days following their exposure. Additionally, those asymptomatic staff/residents who have recovered from COVID-19 infection in the prior three months should follow the same guidance.

If a participant who is unvaccinated/not fully vaccinated has been exposed (≥ 15 cumulative minutes within 24-hours of someone who has recently tested positive for COVID-19) they cannot return to program for 14 days following the last day of that exposure.

Questions or Concerns

Questions or concerns on the content, interpretation or application of this guidance can be directed to the Division of Developmental Disabilities at 1-800-832-9173 or DDD.COVID-19@dhs.nj.gov.

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-after-vaccination.html>

⁵ www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID-QuickRef_Discont_Isolation_and_TBP.pdf



New Jersey Department of Human Services
Division of Developmental Disabilities

Receipt of COVID-19 Information Form

Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention^{1 2} (CDC) provides the following information about COVID-19:

How COVID-19 Spreads

COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person to person, including between people who are physically near each other (within about 6 feet). People who are infected but do not show symptoms can also spread the virus to others. Cases of reinfection with COVID-19 have been reported but are rare. We are still learning about how the virus spreads and the severity of illness it causes.

COVID-19 spreads very easily from person to person

How easily a virus spreads from person to person can vary. COVID-19 appears to spread more efficiently than influenza but not as efficiently as measles, which is among the most contagious viruses known to affect people.

COVID-19 most commonly spreads during close contact

- People who are physically near (within 6 feet) a person with COVID-19 or have direct contact with that person are at greatest risk of infection.
- When people with COVID-19 cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe they produce *respiratory droplets*. These droplets can range in size from larger droplets (some of which are visible) to smaller droplets. Small droplets can also form particles when they dry very quickly in the airstream.
- Infections occur mainly through exposure to respiratory droplets when a person is in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.
- Respiratory droplets cause infection when they are inhaled or deposited on mucous membranes, such as those that line the inside of the nose and mouth.
- As respiratory droplets travel further from the person with COVID-19, the concentration of droplets decreases. Larger droplets fall out of the air due to gravity. Smaller droplets and particles spread apart in the air.
- With passing time, the amount of infectious virus in respiratory droplets also decreases.

COVID-19 can sometimes be spread by airborne transmission

- Some infections can be spread by exposure to virus in small droplets and particles that can linger in the air for minutes to hours. These viruses may be able to infect people who are further than 6 feet away from the person who is infected or after that person has left the space.
- This kind of spread is referred to as *airborne transmission* and is an important way that infections like tuberculosis, measles, and chicken pox are spread.
- There is evidence that under certain conditions, people with COVID-19 seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away. These transmissions occurred within enclosed spaces that had inadequate ventilation. Sometimes the infected person was breathing heavily, for example while singing or exercising.
 - Under these circumstances, scientists believe that the amount of infectious smaller droplet and particles produced by the people with COVID-19 became concentrated enough to spread the virus to other people. The people who were infected were in the same space during the same time or shortly after the person with COVID-19 had left.
- Available data indicates that it is much more common for the virus that causes COVID-19 to spread through

¹ www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>

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close contact with a person who has COVID-19 than through airborne transmission³.

COVID-19 spreads less commonly through contact with contaminated surfaces

- Respiratory droplets can also land on surfaces and objects. It is possible that a person could get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes
- Spread from touching surfaces is not thought to be a common way that COVID-19 spreads

Public health recommendations for vaccinated persons⁴

Currently authorized vaccines in the United States are highly effective at protecting vaccinated people against symptomatic and severe COVID-19. Additionally, a [growing body of evidence](#) suggests that fully vaccinated people are less likely to have asymptomatic infection and potentially less likely to transmit COVID-19 to others.

At this time, people are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 ≥ 2 weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or ≥ 2 weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen).

How long vaccine protection lasts and how much vaccines protect against emerging COVID-19 variants are still under investigation. Until more is known and vaccination coverage increases, some prevention measures will continue to be necessary for all people, regardless of vaccination status.

In public spaces, fully vaccinated people should continue to follow [guidance](#) to protect themselves and others, including wearing a well-fitted [mask](#), [physical distancing](#) (at least 6 feet), avoiding crowds, avoiding poorly ventilated spaces, covering coughs and sneezes, [washing hands](#) often, and following any applicable workplace guidance. Fully vaccinated people should still watch for [symptoms of COVID-19](#), especially following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. If symptoms develop, all people – regardless of vaccination status – should isolate and be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including COVID-19 testing, if indicated. Fully vaccinated people should also continue to follow current [CDC](#) and [NJDOH](#) travel guidance.

Who is at Higher Risk

Everyone, regardless of disability, is at risk for being exposed to COVID-19 and getting sick. Certain populations, including those who are older or have underlying medical conditions are more likely to become severely ill, which means that they may require hospitalization, intensive care, a ventilator to help them breathe, or may even die.

Per the CDC⁵, certain disability groups might be at an increased risk of becoming infected.

- People who have limited mobility or cannot avoid close contact with others who may be infected;
- People who have trouble understanding information or practicing measures like hand washing and social distancing;
- People who may not be able to communicate symptoms of illness.

Individuals, families, guardians, providers and other stakeholders are encouraged to review the CDC links in this document for more information.

³ Pathogens that are spread easily through airborne transmission require the use of special engineering controls to prevent infections. Control practices, including recommendations for patient placement and personal protective equipment for health care personnel in healthcare settings, can be found in Section 2 of [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-disabilities.html>

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People with the below medical conditions **are at an increased risk** for severe illness at any age:

- Cancer;
- Chronic kidney disease;
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease);
- Down Syndrome;
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies;
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant;
- Severe Obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²)
- Pregnancy;
- Sickle cell disease;
- Smoking;
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus.

Based on the information available at this time, people with the following conditions **might be at an increased risk** for severe illness from COVID-19:

- Asthma (moderate to severe);
- Cerebrovascular disease;
- Cystic fibrosis;
- Hypertension or high blood pressure;
- Liver disease;
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines.
- Neurologic conditions, such as dementia;
- Overweight (BMI > 25 kg/m², but < 30 kg/m²);
- Pulmonary fibrosis (damaged/scarred lung tissues);
- Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder);
- Type 1 diabetes mellitus.

Per the CDC, certain disability groups might be at an increased risk of becoming infected.

- People who have limited mobility or cannot avoid close contact with others who may be infected;
- People who have trouble understanding information or practicing measures like hand washing & social distancing;
- People who may not be able to communicate symptoms of illness.

How to reduce the risk of getting COVID-19

It is especially important for people at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, and those who live with them, to protect themselves from getting the virus. The best way for someone to protect himself or herself and help reduce the spread of COVID-19 is to: wear a mask; stay six feet away from others; avoid crowds; avoid poorly ventilated spaces; wash your hands often; cover coughs and sneezes; clean and disinfect; and monitor your health daily.

Face coverings are a critical preventive measure and should be worn in public settings and when around people who don't live in the same household. Information on types of masks and guidance on how to best wear these masks are available from the CDC⁶. They are **most** essential when social distancing is difficult. If an individual does not tolerate a face covering or it is not medically advisable to wear one, measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread must occur, including social distancing, frequent hand washing, and cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces⁷.

Your provider can relay what precautions they are taking to lower the risk of transmission. Division policies related to COVID-19 can be found on the [DHS COVID-19 Information](#) webpage. If a self-directed model is being used, families are encouraged to consider risks and talk with their staff about screening and prevention strategies that may be used.

If you or someone you know has questions about COVID-19 risk, it is recommended that you consult your health care provider, visit New Jersey's [COVID-19 Information Hub](#), or call New Jersey's 24/7 COVID-19 Call Center at 1-800-962-1253.

⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

Individual Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
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By signing this document, the individual or their legal representative acknowledges receipt of this information and will consider it in their planning.

Name of Individual (Please Type): Click or tap here to enter text.

DDDiD/MIS Number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Name of Legal Representative (Self or
Guardian – Please Print): Click or tap here to enter text.

Signature of Legal Representative: _____

Date: _____