



## Important Notice Regarding Prevention of COVID-19

March 17, 2020

To: People living in their own homes or family homes,  
Children in foster care homes, and  
Family members of people with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD)  
living in these settings; and  
Child Foster Home providers serving children with I/DD

COVID-19 is the illness caused by the novel coronavirus. COVID-19 is a virus that makes people feel unwell. People with other health issues are most at-risk if they get this virus.

COVID-19 is spread from person-to-person through droplets in the air and on surfaces that people touch.

To protect the health and safety of people and their families, the Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) is providing the following guidance.

### Help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms

✓Fever      ✓Cough      ✓Shortness of breath

How to [protect yourself and others. See this helpful video: https://youtu.be/MJ8eeC-tVD4](https://youtu.be/MJ8eeC-tVD4)

### Practice good hygiene

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

### Cover coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately follow the “practice good hygiene” steps above.

### Clean and disinfect

- [Clean AND disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- Clean dirty surfaces: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Wash items including washable plush toys as appropriate. If possible, wash items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely.

#### Avoid close contact

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick or have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Put at least 6 feet of space between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at [higher risk](#).
- Choose a room in your home that can be used to separate sick household members from those who are healthy. Identify a separate bathroom for the sick person to use, if possible. Plan to clean these rooms, as needed, when someone is sick.
- Avoid gatherings and activities in the community when possible.

#### Take precautions for visitors

- Prior to accepting a visitor into the home, screen the visitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 by asking the visitor the following questions:
  - Have you had signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
  - Have you had contact in the last 14 days with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, or under investigation for COVID-19?
  - Have you traveled internationally within the last 14 days?
- If you have concerns about a visitor being ill, you can decide to restrict the visitor from entering the home. Consider alternative methods to visit, such as phone or video chat.
- If you choose to allow visitors, provide guidance on protecting themselves and others by practicing proper handwashing, limiting surfaces touched, and maintaining a safe distance from other household members.

#### Working with your staff (i.e., Personal Support Worker, Direct Support Professional, or alternate caregivers)

- Discuss together how staff can support the you in implementing the steps listed above to remain healthy and safe.
- Individuals, families, and child foster home providers should expect staff to follow good hygiene guidelines and preventive measures to reduce the spread of illness.

#### Back-up Planning & Working with the Case Manager

- Ensure you have back-up plans in place for medications, medical supplies, household needs, supports if the individual or primary support were to become ill.
- [Specific guidance around back-up planning has been put out for case managers](#), which is also available for individuals, families, and child foster home providers. Working together is important.

**COVID-19 Resources:**

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Guidance](#)

[ODDS COVID-19 Information](#)

[ODDS COVID-19 YouTube Video](#)