

# Information Memorandum Transmittal Aging and People with Disabilities



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**Number: APD-IM-20-024**

**Issue date: 3/6/2020**

**Topic:** Provider Information

**Due date: 3/6/2020**

**Subject:** Flu Season and Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Prevention for Homecare and Personal Support Workers

**Applies to (check all that apply):**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All DHS employees                                | <input type="checkbox"/> County Mental Health Directors                                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Area Agencies on Aging: Types A and B | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aging and People with Disabilities    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self Sufficiency Programs                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ODDS Children's Intensive In Home Services           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County DD program managers            | <input type="checkbox"/> Stabilization and Crisis Unit (SACU)                            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support Service Brokerage Directors   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other ( <i>please specify</i> ):                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ODDS Children's Residential Services             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Welfare Programs                           |  |

**Message:**

The Department of Human Services is invested in the wellbeing of our in-home consumers and the valued workforce that assists them every day throughout Oregon. We sent an initial communication regarding Seasonal Flu and Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) prevention for Homecare and Personal Support Workers through the Oregon Home Care Commission's (OHCC) Gov Delivery account on March 3, 2020. That fact sheet may be accessed at the link at the bottom of this transmittal.

Local offices should have copies of the fact sheet ready for distribution to Homecare and Personal Support Workers. The agency is attempting to overcommunicate necessary preventative measures, with the goal of minimizing any impact COVID-19 has in Oregon.

To promote broad distribution, social media communications were posted on the same day through the OHCC Facebook account. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) social media posts on Facebook are in English and Spanish.

The OHCC Health and Safety web page has been updated to include the following:

- OHCC fact sheet - Flu Season and Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Prevention for Homecare and Personal Support Workers.
- Link to the Oregon Health Authority Novel Coronavirus Updates (COVID-19) web page.
- Links to CDC prevention videos and guides in English, Spanish and Chinese.

Link to OHCC Health and Safety web page: <https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/HCC/PSW-HCW/Pages/Health-Safety.aspx>

*If you have any questions about this information, contact:*

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# Homecare & Personal Support Workers

## *Flu Season and Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Prevention*

### **Steps For Prevention – Standard Precautions**

Protecting yourself and the person you care for from infectious diseases on the job requires knowing the facts, practicing good hygiene, and taking a few sensible precautions. These are preventive measures that you can control.

#### **Always Practice Standard Precautions.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the following preventive actions to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick outside of work.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- When you are sick, stay home.
- Cover your cough.
- Cover you sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

### **Wash Your Hands**

Hand washing is one of your best defenses against spreading infection. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; handling bodily fluids; after changing gloves; before eating; when hands are visibly soiled; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

### **Are you ill?**

Immediately notify the consumer-employer, employer of record, case manager, personal agent or services coordinator if you are unable to go to work.

## Do you have concerns about being exposed to a respiratory disease on the job?

You should have a conversation with your Consumer-Employer and their Representative or the Employer of Record about your concerns. Remember to always practice standard precautions and wash your hands.

## Personal Protective Equipment

The CDC does not recommend facemasks for the general public. However, healthcare workers should wear facemasks, if they are caring for individuals who have health conditions that put them at additional risk.

The use of facemasks is crucial for people who are taking care of someone in close settings at home who may be experiencing a respiratory disease or flu. Homecare and personal support workers must contact the local office if there is an appropriate need for gloves and facemasks. **Due to demand facemasks and gloves are difficult to obtain and may not be available at the time you submit a request.**

## Resources & Sources

**Oregon Home Care Commission Health & Safety website:**

<https://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/HCC/PSW-HCW/Pages/Health-Safety.aspx>

**Oregon Health Authority:**

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASES/CONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Pages/emerging-respiratory-infections.aspx>

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>

**Find a OHCC safety course near you:**

<https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/de2368.i2.2.20.pdf>