

PHASED RE-OPENING FOR THE AGING NETWORK

Things to consider



As with all programmatic and operational changes, **documentation must be maintained** to track your progress and modifications that will occur as your organization moves through the various stages of success and challenge. Centralina Area Agency on Aging is the fiscal and programmatic monitor for HCCBG and Covid-19 Federal Relief Funds and **must review your draft plan** prior to your re-open date. This will involve planning with and for consumers, employees, vendors, visitors, and volunteers.

While CAAA will not “approve or disapprove” your plan, our staff will determine if you have sufficient plans in place to accomplish the HCCBG mandated programmatic responsibility to improve the physical and mental health status of older adults.

PERSONAL PROTECTION

What **types of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** is needed for your agency? (Gowns, gloves, masks).

- Consider how **often they will need to be changed** throughout the workday.
- Do you have a sufficient **supply chain** to ensure **adequate supply** for all populations at all times without interruption?
- For cloth masks, how are you communicating the recommendations for washing?
- What if consumers do not have access to a washing machine on a daily basis or cannot afford to use commercial washing machines?

Who is required to wear PPE?

- Employees, Vendors, Volunteers, Consumers, Visitors
- What type is considered acceptable? Homemade, paper, medical grade?
- If homemade, washing requirements.
- Can you require PPE to be worn while on your property?

- How will you communicate the proper equipment and method of using the equipment?
- What is the protocol if someone refuses to wear PPE?
- Who is designated to address the issue?
- What if someone cannot afford PPE?
- Who supplies it?
- Who pays for it?

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FROM OSHA:

Does my employer have to provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and who pays for it?

Many OSHA standards require employers to provide personal protective equipment, when it is necessary to protect employees from job-related injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. With few exceptions, OSHA requires employers to pay for personal protective equipment when it is used to comply with OSHA standards. These typically include hard hats, gloves, goggles, safety glasses, welding helmets and goggles, face shields, chemical protective equipment and fall protection equipment. For additional information on PPE, refer to OSHA's [Personal Protective Equipment Web page](#).

<https://www.osha.gov/workers/index.html>

What is the CDC expectation for cleanliness?

- Who will monitor cleanliness of the physical space?
- What is the consequence?
- Who will monitor proper usage of PPE?

Discard PPE into a trash can. There is no evidence to suggest that facility waste needs additional disinfection.

SAFETY- SANITATION AND PHYSICAL SPACE

SANITATION

Consider **frequency, duration, and who is tasked** to complete the job.

- What risk is there to those who are asked to use products to clean regularly?
- What type of documentation will you maintain to demonstrate that these are being done on a regular basis?
- Who is being asked to do this work?
- How are they being trained?

- What special equipment will they need to have on hand?
- What is the purchasing and supply chain to be used to ensure adequate supplies of these materials?
- Should plexi-glass be installed in certain areas such as reception areas?
- NCDHHS focus is on a 10-minute timeframe of individual exposure.

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FROM THE CDC:

Centers for Disease Control Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/Reopening_America_Guidance.pdf

- ***Develop your plan***
- ***Implement your plan***
- ***Maintain and revise your plan***

This reviews the types of products you should consider, where to use those products, and how often the products need to be used. What should be cleaned and how often?

- *Doorknobs both exterior and interior – handles and push bars*
- *Tables and counters, desks, light switches, phones*
- *Keyboards, computer mouse, monitors,*
- *Faucets sinks, toilets*
- *Writing utensils (sign in sheets)*
- *Exercise equipment*
- *Entertainment equipment (i.e. playing cards, dominoes, board games)*
- *Company or volunteer vehicle cleaning schedules*

CDC recommendations for cleaning including if an “**outbreak**” occurs in your building. An outbreak is defined as two or more cases in one setting.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

PHYSICAL DISTANCING/HYGIENE IN GENERAL

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- **DAAS Administrative letter waived the face to face requirements for intake assessments. Other physical distancing issues to consider when re-opening in general include:**
 - Allowing flexible work schedules so that employees are not occupying the same space
 - Increasing physical space between employees at work

- Increasing physical space between employees and customers/volunteers/vendors/visitors
- Conducting meetings in large open space where 6 feet distance can be maintained or conduct them telephonically

PROGRAMMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

Nutrition (Flexibility of funding defers to the safety and security of the consumer)

- How will you ensure physical distancing once you begin to consider re-instating congregate meals?
 - pre-assigned times to limit the number of attendees (eating in shifts)
 - Limit number of attendees at each table



5.6.20 <https://acl.gov/sites/> a new resource for additional guidance from ACL on the re-opening of Senior Nutrition programs

HPDP and other programming

- All in-person, evidence-based programming will be scheduled **at least 30 days after the stay-at-home-order is removed for older adults**. Since these workshops target older adults with chronic conditions, Centralina AAA will be using the most cautious guidance to ensure the highest route possible to ensure the safety of participants.

Senior Centers

- How will Senior Centers limit the number of participants in the Senior Center at any given time?
- Will Senior Centers limit activities and programs that can maintain adequate social distancing?

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

- Community Advisory Committees continue to be restricted from visitation until further notice.
- Ombudsman are also on restricted visitation from LTCF but continue to take complaint cases for resolution by phone.

SCSEP Host Agency

- Consider the job functions that your participant was tasked to complete and are they still safe for the individual?
- What to do if the participant is not comfortable with the tasks assigned to them?
- Should the participant's original training plan be adjusted and resubmitted for approval?
- Will you provide the participant with safety gear? (Masks and gloves) If not, how will this impact their ability to remain at the host site?

HYGIENE

Re-emphasize appropriate hygiene instructions using posters and signage inside and outside establishment.

Individuals should wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available, especially during key times when persons are likely to be infected by or spread germs:

- After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- After using the toilet
- After touching garbage
- Before and after the work shift/program event
- Before and after eating
- After touching objects that have been handled by others
- After cleaning efforts
- After smoking

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html>



NCDHHS now has a three “W” Reminder: Wear a face covering -- Wait at least 6 feet apart from the next person -- Wash your hands frequently

ASSESSMENTS/TESTING

Will you be using **screening questioning** ALL INDIVIDUALS on entry to your agency regarding health status?

- Have you or anyone in the home had **symptoms of Covid-19** (fever, cough, shortness of breath) or have you had **close contact with someone diagnosed** with Covid-19 in the past 14 days?
- Take the individual's **temperature**.
 - What is your procedure if the individual's temperature is elevated?
- Have you taken any **medication that would reduce fever** in the past 8 hours?
- Have you **traveled outside the US or on a cruise** in the past 14 days?

If a **consumer or staff member reports an illness**, what are next steps?

- Who will be notified?
- What sanitation steps will be taken?
- How will the person be allowed re-entry?
- Communicate **self-care and at home isolation** procedures for 14 days prior to return. This includes how to discontinue home isolation

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Create or follow the county, state, or federal **return to work guidance** for individuals who have been exposed, have had the virus, or been in close contact with someone who has been sick.

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FROM THE CDC

When Can I Return to Work After Having COVID-19?

CDC provides [guidance](#) about the discontinuation of home isolation for people with COVID-19. Generally:

- **If you have been isolating yourself at home:** Your healthcare provider or state, local, tribal, or territorial health department can provide the best information about when you can discontinue isolation and return to essential activities, such as going to work.
- **If you have been hospitalized with COVID-19:** Follow your healthcare provider's discharge and follow-up instructions, which should include information about when you can return to essential activities, such as going to work.

Employers should note that, because of the strain on the healthcare system associated with the ongoing pandemic, not all COVID-19 patients need medical attention in order to get better, and not all workers may be able to provide a doctor's note before returning to work after recovering from COVID-19. Sending a worker to a doctor when there is no need for medical care may place additional, and possibly unnecessary, strain on doctors' offices, urgent care facilities, and hospitals, and may contribute to the spread of the disease.

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/medicalinformation.html#return_to_work

Are new procedures needed if someone becomes ill and needs medical attention at your agency?

Communicate the importance of employees staying home if sick and creating a culture where that is accepted and expected.

Continue conducting **telephonic intake and follow up** on clients.

Using the DAAS Administrative letter to waive face to face as long as possible to reduce exposure of staff, consumer and individuals who provide support.

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FROM DEPARTMENT OF LABOR/EEOC

Identify a workplace coordinator who will be responsible for COVID-19 issues and their impact at the workplace.

Implement flexible sick leave and supportive policies and practices.

- **Ensure that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of and understand these policies.**
- **Maintain flexible policies that permit employees to *stay home to care for a sick family member or take care of children (grandchildren or other extended family)* due to school and childcare closures. Additional flexibilities might include giving advances on future sick leave and allowing employees to donate sick leave to each other.**
- **Employers that do not currently offer sick leave to some or all of their employees may want to draft *non-punitive "emergency sick leave" policies.***
- **Employers should *not require a positive COVID-19 test result or a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or to return to work.***

Healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely manner.

- Review human resources policies to make sure that **policies and practices are consistent with public health recommendations and are consistent with existing state and federal workplace laws** (for more information on employer responsibilities, visit the [Department of Labor's external icon](#) and the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's external icon](#) websites).
- Connect employees to **employee assistance program (EAP)** resources (if available) and community resources as needed. Employees may need additional social, behavioral, and other services, for example, to cope with the death of a loved one.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/guidance-small-business.pdf>

- **Prepare for significant absenteeism** from fear or actual infection
- **Share your response plan with employees and clearly communicate expectations.**



SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FROM THE CDC

PEOPLE WHO ARE AT HIGH RISK FOR SEVERE ILLNESS: Employee or Consumer

COVID-19 is a new disease and there is limited information regarding risk factors for severe disease. Based on currently available information and clinical expertise, **older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions** might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Based on what we know now, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- [People 65 years and older](#)
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility

People of all ages with [underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled](#), including:

- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised
 - Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

Your **work plan** must include how you intend to protect both employees and consumers who are in the high-risk category. **To willfully put individuals in harm's way without a mitigation plan opens you and your organization up to unnecessary risk.**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>



SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FROM JOB ACCOMODATION NETWORK

Must employers provide reasonable accommodations under the ADA in response to the pandemic coronavirus situation.

JAN (Job Accommodation Network) is hearing from many employers who are inquiring about their responsibilities under the ADA to accommodate employees who have concerns about exposure to the coronavirus. Generally, these questions have centered around individuals who may be at higher risk for developing complications associated with the coronavirus. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), this includes older adults and individuals who have serious chronic medical conditions, like heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, and compromised immunity. This means that when an employer receives a request for accommodation to reduce the risk of exposure to the coronavirus, an employer must consider this request under the ADA and engage in the interactive process to provide reasonable accommodations, barring undue hardship.

<https://askjan.org/blogs/jan/2020/03/the-ada-and-managing-reasonable-accommodation-requests-from-employees-with-disabilities-in-response-to-covid-19.cfm>

VOLUNTEERS

How and who will **train volunteers** on enhanced organization sanitation, safety and security related to Covid-19?

How will you **document their acknowledgement and intent to adhere** to these new policies and procedures?

Is there a **legal liability** in the use of volunteers for standard program or business operations?

- How will you know if a volunteer has been sick or exposed?
- Does this put your agency at risk of legal action if a volunteer exposes a consumer to the virus?
- Does it put your agency at risk of legal action if a volunteer is exposed to the virus and claims your agency did not protect him/her from exposure?
- Consider including volunteers in the daily screening protocol and temperature check prior to their entry into the building.

SECURITY

What is the policy for **vendors**?

- PPE required?
- Only during hours when consumers are not present?
- Separate entrance?
- Screening questions and temp protocol?

How will you assure and **communicate to consumers** your agency is a safe space?

Update your media policy.

- **Include what universal message regarding the COVID Crisis and your individual agency response, your county, your state, and your federal government.**
- Who will **give interviews to reporters**, what is the message for COVID issues, outbreaks, rumors, and inspirational stories?
- In what way are you managing your **message across all platforms** of social media?

Consider **legal liability with your insurance carrier and legal representatives** for accusations of outbreak, infection, exposures, etc. by any or all of the following:

- Is specific insurance needed at this time?

In what ways will you **communicate with the Health Department** to review protocol prior to re-opening to ensure proper safety steps are being taken?

If someone **reports a positive test**, what is your obligation to communicate to those who were potentially exposed without identifying the source?

Control the spread of rumors and misinformation.

- Post information from trusted sources only (Centers for Disease Control, FEMA, NCDHHS, NC Emergency Management)
- Fact check information that is from unverified sources – and discourage the dispersion of this information. <https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus/rumor-control>
- **Be aware and share information about Covid-19 or Corona Virus Scams**



SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FROM THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

AVOID CORONAVIRUS SCAMS

- **Don't respond to texts, emails, or calls about checks from the government.** Here's [what you need to know](#).
- **Ignore online offers for vaccinations.** There are no products proven to treat or prevent COVID-19 at this time.
- **Be wary of ads for test kits.** The [FDA recently announced](#) approval for one home test kit, which requires a doctor's order. But most test kits being advertised have **not** been approved by the FDA and aren't necessarily accurate.
- **Hang up on robocalls.** Scammers are using [illegal robocalls](#) to pitch everything from low-priced health insurance to work-at-home schemes.
- **Watch for emails claiming to be from the CDC or WHO.** Use sites like [coronavirus.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) and [usa.gov/coronavirus](https://www.usa.gov/coronavirus) to get the latest information and [don't click on links from sources you don't know](#).
- **Do your homework when it comes to [donations](#).** Never donate in cash, by gift card, or by wiring money.

<https://www.ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams-consumer-advice>

Source Materials:

- Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging <https://acl.gov/COVID-19>
- Centers for Disease Control <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Department of Labor/OSHA <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/standards.html>
- FEMA <https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus>
- Federal Trade Commission <https://www.ftc.gov/>
- Job Accommodation Network <https://askjan.org/topics/COVID-19.cfm>
- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services including the specific Executive Orders from Gov. Cooper <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/covid19>
- N.C. Department of Public Safety/Gov. Cooper media briefings <https://www.ncdps.gov/storm-update>

IT'S NOT ABOUT SPEED, IT'S ABOUT MOMENTUM



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