



**July 24, 2020**

The Self-Advocacy  
Association of New York  
State

**(SANYS)**

**OPWDD** Guidance for  
Home Visits for people  
living in Certified  
Residences (Group  
Homes)

July 24, 2020

## Office for People With Developmental Disabilities



**OPWDD** shared guidance for people who live in group homes about leaving their group home to visit homes and family

**SANYS** hopes reading this guide helps people understand the guidance

We also want to hear from you about your experience with leaving group homes on visits



OPWDD says people should be able to leave their group home for visits if their region is in **Phase 4** of reopening



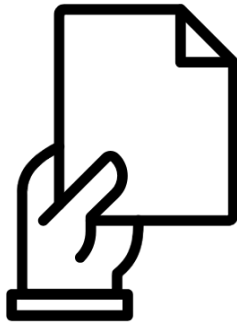
Right now, all regions of the state are in **Phase 4**



You can check what **Phase** your region is in by going to [forward.ny.gov](https://www.forward.ny.gov)



**OPWDD** says that if a person living in a group home is healthy, and if everyone at the house they visit is healthy and has avoided contact with anyone who might be sick, then people can visit homes and family



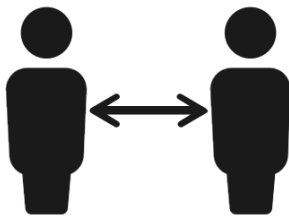
**OPWDD** has given some guidance on what they think will keep people safe during visits outside of a group home



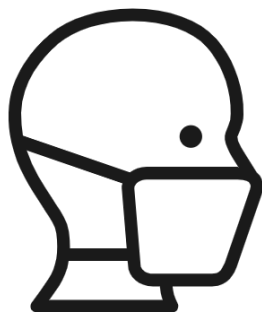
**OPWDD** says a person going for a visit should be able to pass a health screening and temperature check before they leave



**OPWDD** wants a person going for a visit to wash their hands before they leave and when they return



**OPWDD** says staff should remind families with visitors to wash hands, wear face coverings, and social distance if possible



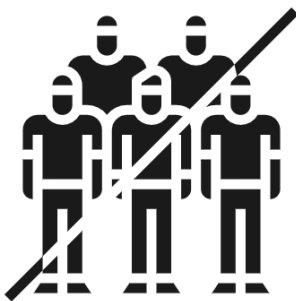
**OPWDD** says staff should help make sure that families people visit have face coverings, and that they understand how to help people be safe



**OPWDD** says that if you have to use agency transportation it should only be with people from your own residence



**OPWDD** says agency transportation should only be half full at most



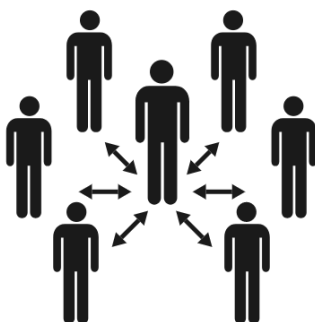
**OPWDD** wants staff to help people learn how to be on transportation safely, and wants people to wear face masks if they can



**OPWDD** says that when people need to use public transportation staff should be able to give them hand sanitizer to use



**OPWDD** wants staff to collect information from people who leave group homes for visits or outings



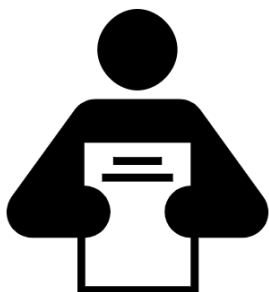
**OPWDD** would like staff to get the names of people that a person visits, and addresses of places that a person visits when out



**OPWDD** also wants staff to confirm that the people a person is visiting have not been exposed to the virus, and do not seem sick



**OPWDD** wants staff to document that people leaving a residence pass a health screening before they leave and after they return



You can work with your **Care Coordinator** to make sure you have a plan for visiting people outside of a group home safely





**OPWDD** also has guidance for people who were staying with family because of COVID-19 and now want to return to group homes



People may return to group homes if the group home has had no one with COVID-19 for 14 days, and if the person has not had contact with anyone who might have COVID-19 for 14 days



The person should also be able to show that they have not had any symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days (You can find symptoms here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>)



We hope this makes it easier for people to understand how they may meet **OPWDD** guidance

**SANYS** wants to keep hearing from you about your experiences going on visits outside of group homes

You can contact us at [www.sanys.org](http://www.sanys.org)