

Good Morning Everyone,

The world health community continues to monitor closely the emergence of “coronavirus disease 2019” (COVID-19). At this time, no one knows how severe this outbreak will be. Given this uncertainty, and the fact that the seasonal influenza (flu) virus is also widespread, we are taking proactive steps to address a number of business concerns. Our Executive Management Team is meeting regularly, and I want to assure you that the agency’s goal is to actively protect the overall health and safety of people supported and of all our employees.

First and foremost, we want to maintain a safe workplace and encourage and/or adopt practices protecting the health of employees, customers, visitors or others. ACHIEVE’s Director of Nursing sent an excellent and informative guidance email out to all staff last week. Please read it carefully and share best practices within your teams.

I am asking that all employees and individuals supported to cooperate in taking steps to reduce the transmission of communicable diseases in the workplace. Employees and individuals are reminded of the following:

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Wash your hands frequently with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your mouth with tissues whenever you sneeze, and discard used tissues in the trash.
- Avoid people who are sick with respiratory symptoms.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces.

ACHIEVE has provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers throughout the workplace and in common areas. Cleaning sprays and wipes are also be provided to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as telephones and keyboards. **PLEASE do this often!**

It is critical that employees **do not report to work** while they are experiencing respiratory symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills or fatigue. Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that employees remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 degrees F or 37.8 degrees C) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. Many times, with the best of intentions, employees report to work even though they feel ill. We provide paid sick time and other benefits to compensate employees who are unable to work due to illness. Employees who report to work ill will be sent home in accordance with these health guidelines.

We know the situation is changing daily, so we continue to closely monitor and follow recommendations made by the NYS and Broome County Departments of Health, as well as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Should there be any critical recommendations for action made by these experts, **we will send out that information to you right away.**

Please contact any member of our Executive Team with your questions. I am available 24/7 via email or telephone.

As always, I appreciate your care and concern over our agency, each other, and the individuals we support.

Amy

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