



Reopening RI Phase III: Picking Up Speed



During Phase 3, all vulnerable populations identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including anyone age 65 and older, are still strongly advised to stay at home unless they must go to work; travel for medical treatment; or get other necessities such as groceries, gas, or medication.

Public health guidance is still in effect and is key to stopping the spread of COVID-19.

1. Wear masks
2. Maintain 6-foot social distancing
3. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer
4. Stay home if you have a fever, cough, or other symptoms of COVID

Setting-based public health rules from Phase II remain in effect for Phase III. This means that stores, restaurants, and other businesses will still need to limit the number of people inside at any time. The limit for most places in Phase 3 is 66% (two-thirds) of their capacity. For example, if a restaurant could have 30 people inside before COVID started, they can now only let 20 people inside.

RIPTA buses, the Ride Program, and other transportation providers also need to limit the number of people who get on a bus, van, or in a car together. Locations that can re-open under Phase 3 include religious services, parks, beaches, the zoo, museums, bowling alleys, movie theaters, barbershops, hair salons, and nail salons. All businesses and organizations will ask visitors for contact information so that it is available for contact tracing, if needed.

A mask or face covering needs to be worn in all public places where you are close to other people. When you're going outside, bring a face covering. Keep a six-foot distance away from other people or groups, whether you're wearing a face covering or not. If you cannot maintain a six-foot distance, wear a face covering. A face covering is not required when you can easily and continuously maintain at least six feet of distance from other people.

Are there exceptions for Rhode Islanders with developmental disabilities or medical conditions?

Yes. The Executive Order states: “Face coverings shall not be required of those who are unable to comply” or “those whose health would be damaged” by wearing a face covering.

If a person with a disability is unable to wear a face mask, do I still have to allow them in my business or government agency?

If a person with a disability is not able to wear a face mask, state and local government agencies and private businesses must consider reasonable modifications to a face mask policy so that the person with the disability can participate in, or benefit from, the programs offered or goods and services that are provided. A reasonable modification means changing policies, practices, and procedures, if needed, to provide goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations to an individual with a disability.[10] The requirement to modify a policy, practice, or procedure does not include individuals without disabilities, as they are not protected under the ADA.

Examples of reasonable modifications to a face mask policy

- Allow a person to wear a scarf, loose face covering, or full face shield instead of a face mask;
- Allow customers to order online with curbside pick-up or no contact delivery in a timely manner;
- Allow customers to order by phone with curb-side pick-up or no contact delivery in a timely manner;
- Allow a person to wait in a car for an appointment and enter the building when called or texted; or
- Offer appointments by telephone or video calls.

For more information about the ADA and face masks see:

<https://www.adasoutheast.org/ada/publications/legal/ada-and-face-mask-policies.php>

The Americans with Disabilities Act 30th Anniversary

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law in 1990. The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

Share Your #ThanksToTheADA Moment!

In celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the ADA National Network is asking everyone to share a moment in their lives when they were thankful for the ADA.

On a social media platform of your choosing use **#ThanksToTheADA** to share what the ADA means to you. This will look different for everyone, so have fun and be creative! Share any media of your choosing, (video, picture, written word, or other) and include **#ThanksToTheADA**.

For more information visit:

<https://adata.org/thanks-to-the-ada-campaign>



Honoring 30 Years of the ADA

by the Campaign for Disability Employment (CDE) Team

<https://www.whatcanyoudocampaign.org/about/>

July 26, 1990 was a bright day in Washington, D.C., both literally and figuratively. On that day 30 years ago, President George H. W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), landmark legislation that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities across community life, including employment.

The purpose of the ADA is clear: to create a better, more inclusive America by reaffirming its ideal of equal opportunity. But the ADA didn't just create a better, more inclusive America for people with disabilities. It created a better, more inclusive America for all of us.

President Bush emphasized this in the remarks he delivered before putting pen to paper to sign the ADA on the South Lawn of the White House, and his sentiments still ring true today. Speaking to the business community in particular, he said:

"You have in your hands the key to the success of this act, for you can unlock a splendid resource of untapped human potential that, when freed, will enrich us all."

Indeed, people with disabilities can and do enrich our nation's workplaces and communities every day, and for the past 10 years, the Campaign for Disability Employment (CDE) has been honored to highlight their many and diverse contributions. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, the CDE is a collaborative effort among several disability and business organizations that works to change attitudes about disability and employment through personal and positive stories and imagery.

Our public service announcement (PSA) campaigns each focus on a different angle of disability employment, from the importance of setting high expectations for youth to helping people stay at or return to work after injury or illness. But they all share a common goal—to encourage businesses and others to recognize the talent and value that individuals with disabilities bring to the workplace and the benefits that come with full inclusion.

The CDE is proud to honor the ADA's anniversary this year, and to showcase its value to individuals, employers and communities across America, every year. We hope you will join us in marking this milestone. For ideas on how to do so, please visit the U.S. Department of Labor's ADA30 webpage. Of course, we also hope you will join our movement as we continue to shine a light on the benefits of workplace inclusion, for all of us.

- **Thanks to the ADA** there are captions and sign language interpreters at theaters, concerts and ball games.
- **Thanks to the ADA** there is tactile signage for people who are blind at museums, parks, office buildings, schools, hospitals and more.
- **Thanks to the ADA** voter booths and transportation is accessible.
- **Thanks to the ADA** people with disabilities can request accommodations that make working accessible and easier for them.
- **Thanks to the ADA** a service dog can accompany a person with a disability to school, a job site, and places for shopping, dining, and recreating.
- **Thanks to the ADA** people with disabilities can stay in public schools and receive accommodations to learn and succeed.
- **Thanks to the ADA** many people with disabilities now live in their communities instead of institutions.
- **Thanks to the ADA** accessible parks and recreational areas allows people with disabilities to enjoy their leisure time.
- **Thanks to the ADA** tools for ensuring effective communication give people with vision disabilities access to documents, and websites.
- **Thanks to the ADA** there are more accessible and inclusive practices throughout the US. Improvements include these items and more: ramps, signs in Braille, TTY lines, sensory warnings, service animals, non-discrimination policies, accessible parking, Adaptive services and more!

Stories Needed about impact of COVID-19 on People with Disabilities

https://www.aucd.org/template/news.cfm?news_id=14627&parent=16&parent_title=Hom

Congress is writing the next bill to respond to the needs of Americans in this crisis. In order for the needs of people with disabilities and their families to be addressed in the next bill, members need to hear about the real impacts. Often, a short personal story is helpful for them. Below are tips and tools to share your story.



Important to include:

- How services and supports have been impacted by social distancing and how this impacts you
- Examples:
 - Not being able to go to school, work, community activities, day program
 - Not being able to have in-home or community support (Direct Support Professionals, aides, personal assistants, nurses)
 - Medical and other appointments being canceled

What to send in a story:

- A picture of you at home; members of Congress need to SEE all of us
- **Story template**
 - My name is _____ and I am _____ (a person with disability, family member, friend). I am from _____ (town and state). The COVID-19 emergency has _____ (stopped services - explain which). I am worried about _____ (explain what the impact is). I know you are working on the fourth relief package for COVID-19. I want to learn more about how you are going to help people with disabilities in this package. Thank you very much for your time.
- **Example:**

My name is Liz Weintraub and I am a person with an intellectual and developmental disability. I am from Rockville, MD. The COVID-19 emergency has me working from home. I am worried about getting help from staff coming into my home while "stay home, saves lives." I need information about COVID-19 to be in plain language as its hard for me to understand and feel safe during these hard times if information is not accessible. I know you are working on the 4th relief package for COIVD-19. I want to learn more about how you are going to help people with disabilities in this package. Thank you very much for your time.

How to send a story:

- AUCD is happy to compile stories and send them to your members of Congress and to Congressional leaders. If you want us to send your story simply email it to rrodgers@aucd.org.
- If you want to send your story directly to your members of Congress, the best way right now is via email. If you need help locating the right email addresses please email rrodgers@aucd.org

The **Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)** is a membership organization that supports and promotes a national network of university-based interdisciplinary programs, including the Sherlock Center. AUCD is a resource for local, state, national, and international agencies and policy makers concerned about people living with developmental and other disabilities and their families.

My Turn: A. Kathryn Power: Telehealth's time has come

Op-Ed piece from the Providence Journal 7/5/2020

<https://www.providencejournal.com/opinion/20200705/my-turn-a-kathryn-power-telehealthrsquos-time-has-come>

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to make many changes. One, surely, is how we access health care.

Four months ago, “telehealth” was something of a novelty. Few of us had tried it, and as long as we had other options, we didn’t explore its potential.

Today, telehealth is commonplace in Rhode Island and across the nation — viewed as an essential means of connecting people and accessing care.

This shift extends to behavioral health care, and the biggest reason is because telehealth is working. Telehealth services are proving to be safe and effective. More than that, they are providing advantages over conventional approaches to care.

The COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted the delivery of health care for individuals with behavioral health concerns and substance-use conditions, and the need for this care is expected to grow in the wake of the pandemic. Telehealth can help — expanding access, and doing so in a way that avoids inequity and isolation in communities that are deeply affected by the social determinants of health.

Already, we are seeing this happen.

In Rhode Island, providers who help individuals with mental health and substance-use challenges are pointing to fewer missed appointments, improved communication, easier scheduling and greater responsiveness as they work with clients in the moment rather than making them wait for the next available office visit. Providers also say telehealth helps them reach the most at-risk and hard-to-engage clients, perhaps because clients feel more at ease and willing to talk. It also helps clients avoid challenges with childcare, transportation and scheduling conflicts, as well as unanticipated wait times once they arrive for an appointment.

This is consistent with evidence we already had.

A 2018 report from the Behavioral Health Workforce Research Center concluded that telehealth is “widely considered to be a promising practice to reach underserved populations.” The stumbling block, the report said, was financing and reimbursement challenges that were discouraging “telehealth’s widespread adoption.” Yet, the report found that providers “overwhelmingly agreed” that telehealth is important for “reaching more patients.” Telehealth, it noted, “allows organizations to see patients over a greater geographic distance” and “allows for a more efficient workflow.”

This is not to say that telehealth is perfect. It may come with background distractions. Patients who have difficulty with speech or hearing can sometimes find the telehealth experience frustrating. There are also privacy concerns with platforms such as Zoom. And then there are the regulatory challenges that must be addressed. So there is more work to do.

But it is clear that telehealth has a significant and growing role to play.

According to a recent U.S. News & World Report article, telehealth claims increased 4,347% nationwide from March 2019 to March 2020. They accounted for 0.17% of medical services or procedures listed on insurance claims during March 2019. One year later, they accounted for 7.52%.

Policy changes during the COVID-19 pandemic have helped to remove some of the barriers and promote telehealth as a means to provide care. Of course, in the midst of the pandemic, telehealth is also helping people access care without adding to fears about getting sick.

With all the challenges we face, including the behavioral health fallout from COVID-19, it is even more important that we have long-term health-care options that work. The events of 2020 show that telehealth is an option we surely need.

A. Kathryn Power is director of the state Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals.

Silver Linings

Dolphins are bringing ashore ‘gifts’ while coronavirus keeps humans away

<https://nypost.com/2020/05/22/dolphins-bring-ashore-gifts-as-coronavirus-keep-humans-away/>

Dolphins in an Australian coastal town have been bringing ashore “gifts” from the sea — and volunteers say it might be a sign they’re missing human interaction while coronavirus restrictions keep visitors away. “The pod has been bringing us regular gifts, showing us how much they’re missing the public interaction and attention,” said a post on the cafe’s Facebook page. “They are definitely missing you all.” The treasures include sea sponges, barnacle-encrusted bottles and pieces of coral.

Massage chairs donated to hospital staff respite rooms

<https://www.wpri.com/news/massage-chairs-donated-to-hospital-staff-respite-rooms/>

Gifts from a local retail chain are helping frontline workers focus on self care, during one of the most stressful times in their career.

Lifespan Clinical Psychologist Dr. Kristy Dalrymple says, “The respite rooms can really be helpful with is providing our healthcare workers and our staff with an actual physical space they can go to, to really take a break and really recharge and refocus.”

“What’s really important, the best thing that we can do is support ourselves and each other in taking mini breaks and pacing ourselves because it is such intense and stressful work,” said Dr. Dalrymple.

Ocean State Job Lot’s charitable foundation recently made a generous donation of massage chairs to staff lounges or respite rooms at each of its hospitals. Ocean State Job Lot CEO Marc Perlman saying in a statement, “Healthcare workers have been putting their lives at risk during the crisis, which places them under incredible stress. We are happy to be able to provide this token of appreciation for their dedication and sacrifice.”

Each of the chairs cost roughly \$7,000 dollars and are now set up in Lifespan hospitals across our area including Hasbro, Miriam, Newport, and Bradley Hospital.

North Kingstown potbelly pig rescue needs used shoe donations

by SAM READ, NBC 10 NEWS

A purple painted house sits off of Ten Rod Road in North Kingstown. "Everybody knows the purple house, and everybody knows the cow car," said Jennifer Lima, a two-year volunteer of "Smith and Agli's Potbelly Manor."

When driving by the house, you can't miss dozens of buoys that are positioned perfectly outside. "The buoys are my thing. I've collected buoys for a lot of years," said Audrey Agli, one of the home owners. "The purple is Liz's favorite color, you can't miss us."

Behind all of the eye-catching accents is where the real magic happens.

Since the 90s, partners Liz Smith and Audrey Agli have been rescuing animals particularly pigs, which live on their farm, behind and next to their big purple home.

"People don't know there's a pig farm here," said Lima. "I tell people, 'No, no, no, the place behind that, they have the llamas and the cows,' and [people] they're like, 'All that behind the house?' It's so amazing what goes on here, people just don't know."

To date, they've rescued and re-homed about 1,000 full-figured pigs turned pets. They also take in other animals.

"Most of them, actually all of them, are usually abused," said Liz Smith, the co-owner. "We take them in, fix them up, and try to re-home them."

"We get involved in just about every aspect of trying to help pigs get a new home," added Agli. "They're very smart, very intelligent, easily trained."

The couple absolutely adores animal. They've invested a lot of their own time and money. "We get no funding, everything is on us," said Agli. "We love animals and we dislike people who abuse animals, so we do what we can to help them," added Smith.

To help feed the friendly fellas, every year, they collect wearable pairs of used shoes.

"People donate shoes, we send them off and the money, it goes by per pound and the money we get helps fund Potbelly Manor," said Smith.

A bin sits outside of their rescue ranch near the road.

"Sometimes people give us one shoe. We need two," said Agli. "But that helps us out a lot, when they donate."

So far, they've collected about 20 bags of shoes, but they need to collect 100 in order to receive \$1,000 for their farm from Funds2org. Each bag is to be filled with 25 pairs.

"A lot of people are cleaning closets now and that's been helping us," said Agli. "We really hope a lot more people will donate to us, it's a win-win. They donate the shoes, we get the money for the farm, and the shoes go to someone in need."

"Every single penny we get from the shoes goes directly to feed the animals," said Lima.

Anyone who would like to donate wearable shoes can drop them off at 401 Ten Rod Road or if it's a large load, it can be picked up by the owners.

Study finds being kind could make you live longer

There's more evidence that being kind is good for us. A new study, published this week, suggested that doing altruistic acts such as volunteering could help us live longer. The research, published by the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, found that people over the age of 50 who volunteer for two hours a week have a substantially reduced risk of mortality, less chance of developing physical impairments and an improved sense of wellbeing compared to those who don't.

"Regular altruistic activity reduces our risk of death," said study co-author, Dr Eric Kim of Harvard's School of Public Health. Dr Kim added that volunteering in the time of coronavirus could be even more rewarding. "If you are able to do so while abiding by health guidelines, you not only can help to heal and repair the world, but you can help yourself as well," he said.

Kindness vs coronavirus: how altruistic acts are helping people cope

Excerpted from Positive News at <https://www.positive.news>

On the day lockdown was announced in Wales, Beverley Jones, 56, was busy putting notes through doors in her village of Raglan. "If in this time of isolation you need anything, we will be popping up each morning," she wrote. "Don't hesitate to call at any point." Since then, she's been shopping for nine households each week. Doing this has helped Jones cope during the pandemic. "Helping others gives me a purpose, routine, and a little bit of control over my day. It also gives me great joy to know I'm helping others in their time of need."

During lockdown, many have signed up as volunteers, helped vulnerable people in their community, or carried out small acts of kindness. So, do crises bring out the best in us? We asked people what altruistic acts they've been doing and why, and spoke to psychologists, to find out how giving boosts our mood and helps us to stay resilient.

Many people said they wanted to play their part in the response to the coronavirus crisis. Many say helping others has had an impact on how they feel. Psychologists have found a number of reasons for this. One is that helping others feels meaningful. Times of crisis make us re-evaluate what is important to us, Dr Rachel Allan, a counselling psychologist, says. "Sometimes when life's going on as normal, we don't stop to reflect," she says. "But now, more of us are pausing to think about what matters to us. An activity that carries meaning for us will boost our mood."

Claire Goodwin-Fee is a psychotherapist who has set up a bank of more than 3,000 volunteers to give frontline workers emotional support during the pandemic. Engaging in acts of kindness may improve our mood during the pandemic because it gives us something to focus on, and a sense of control. "At the moment, so much has been taken away from us but kindness is one thing we do have control over and is a positive distraction," Goodwin-Fee says. Social distancing measures have also taken away our usual way of connecting with others and volunteering can partially restore these. "It connects us to other people and to something that's bigger than us," Goodwin-Fee says. "We feel that kindness comes back somehow and that it swells around us". Kind acts even release feel-good hormones and physically change our brains. "Gratitude creates different pathways in your brain and changes the way your brain looks and functions," Goodwin-Fee says.

None of this is to say that kind acts do not often take hard work, time, energy and commitment. People who are kind also deserve gratitude and recognition themselves. But Beverley wants her neighbors to know they have helped her enormously during the pandemic shutdown. "[People] keep saying they feel bad asking me for help," she says. "But what they don't realize is that they're doing me a favor, too."

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, BH Link is here for you

BH Link's mission is to ensure all Rhode Islanders experiencing mental health and substance use crises receive the appropriate services they need as quickly as possible in an environment that supports their recovery. Call 911 if there is risk of immediate danger. Visit the BH Link website at www.bhlink.org or for confidential support and to get connected to care:

CALL (401) 414-LINK (5465)

If under 18 CALL: (855) KID(543)-LINK(5465)

Visit the 24-HOUR/7-DAY TRIAGE CENTER at 975 Waterman Avenue, East Providence, RI

Stay Informed with Information on COVID-19

Rhode Island Department of Health COVID-19 Resources

Hotline (401) 222-8022 or 211 after hours;

Email RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov

Website <https://health.ri.gov/covid/>

Center for Disease Control COVID-19 Information

Website cdc.gov/coronavirus

Videos <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/videos.html>

Includes a link to ASL videos

BHDDH Information on COVID-19's Impact on DD Services and the DD Community

Website bhddh.ri.gov/COVID

RI Parent Information Network (RIPIN)

Website <https://ripin.org/covid-19-resources/>

Call Center (401) 270-0101 or email callcenter@ripin.org

Advocates in Action – for videos and easy to read materials

Website <https://www.advocatesinaction.org/>

Website offers BrowseAloud, which will read the website to you

Sign Up for Our Email List

If you aren't receiving email updates and newsletters from the Division, you can sign up on our website. From the main BHDDH page at bhddh.ri.gov, select **What's New**, then go to bottom and click on **DD Community Newsletter**. The link to sign up for the BHDDH Newsletter is directly below the title, as shown in the picture at right.

DD Community Newsletter

[SIGN UP FOR THE BHDDH NEWSLETTER](#)

Contacting the Division

The department is working on a reduced workforce and therefore calls should not be placed directly to your social caseworker. DDD has put 24-hour phone coverage in place with a central business hour phone number and an on-call number for nights and weekends.

If you have a vital need, please call the numbers below. If you have any general questions or concerns, please email them if you can, in order to try to leave the phone lines free for those who need to call. We will do our best to address your questions directly or through future newsletters.

ARTS EQUITY, THE ARC OF BLACKSTONE VALLEY, LIFE, INC., WEST BAY RESIDENTIAL, OLEAN CENTER

Invite you to join us & submit a poem for the

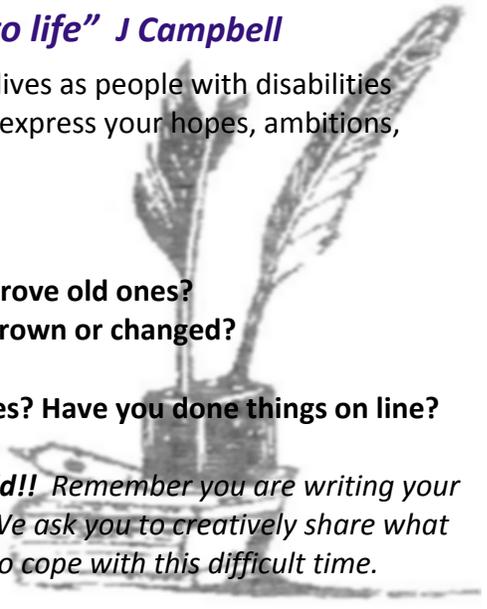
29th Annual Allen Ginsberg Poetry Competition for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities

“Each of us has meaning and we bring it to life” J Campbell

Through this theme we can bring awareness to the world about our lives as people with disabilities especially during this COVID time. Write about the things you know, express your hopes, ambitions, worries or doubts. *Here are a few questions you might think about:*

- How has sheltering at home changed your life?
- What has inspired you during this time of social distancing?
- Are you using the “found time” to develop new skills or improve old ones?
- How have relationships with family and friends improved, grown or changed?
- What music, art, book or hobby is inspiring you?
- What are your thoughts about not being in ‘regular’ activities? Have you done things on line?

→ ***Our poems are a great opportunity to communicate our world!! Remember you are writing your personal thoughts and experiences but revealing them publicly. We ask you to creatively share what is important to you - what you write can help and inspire others to cope with this difficult time.***



→ COMPETITION GUIDELINES ←

- **The competition is open to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities**
Developmental disability is defined as a disability, developed before the age of 22 years old, which results in substantial limitations in major life activity and is due to mental retardation or related conditions including cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or other neurological conditions.
- **Submit one or two (maximum) of your best poems on the theme, selected top 7 receive awards**
- **Poems must be typed (double spaced) and original, unpublished work of the author**
- **Poems can not be previous entries, longer than two 8 1/2” x 11” pages and minimum 12 point font**
- **Poem title, Poet’s name, address, telephone and poem must be on the paper**
- **Submission Deadline is 3 PM, Thursday, August 6th. Submit your poem by email or snail mail to:**

ArtsEquityRI@gmail.com OR Arts Equity • 500 Prospect Street • Pawtucket, RI 02860

*Since we cannot yet come together as a group for a final event, we will be discussing with all the agencies how to celebrate and recognize the work of the submitting poets. So write a poem - write two! We look forward to receiving and reading all of them. **If you have any questions please call us at 725-0247***