



MEMORANDUM

To: All DDA Stakeholders
From: Bernard Simons, Deputy Secretary *Bernard Simons*
Developmental Disabilities Administration
Subject: Meaningful Day Services Reopening Considerations
Date: June 3, 2020

NOTE: Please inform appropriate staff members of the contents of this memorandum.

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) acknowledges the uncertainties that exist related to DDA-funded services that have closed due to COVID-19, and what things may look like moving forward. The DDA will not be establishing specific requirements for, or providing specific guidance or advice to, Meaningful Day providers related to reopening of services and/or sites. Instead, the DDA will share considerations and a framework based on national best practices, so that each provider can create their own individual reopening plans, as appropriate.

Please note each provider will be responsible for ensuring any plan for re-opening services and/or sites that the provider develops complies with currently effective State and local orders and other applicable laws, regulations, policies, guidance, or directives.

The DDA is currently coordinating with national-level groups such as the National Association of State Developmental Disabilities Directors (NASDDDS) and the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) to look at all the frameworks of “Reopening Day Services.” This information will be shared with providers for their consideration as they are drafting their reopening plans. NASDDDS suggests that providers consider the following information and parameters as they develop individualized plans for reopening their Meaningful Day services:

- Strategies and considerations need to be planful and done with the priority of safely re-engaging people;
- Assurance that individual choice, preference, needs and understanding of personal risk should be balanced with motivations of providers and/or families;
- Strategies may need to account for limited service capacity and workforce gaps;
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance is an underpinning of all approaches and considerations;
- Each state (and even locality) may require a different approach based on state and local government orders; and
- Considerations must have an eye to community-based options, self-direction and use of technology.

What DDA is doing

- The DDA is Monitoring all CDC guidance and posting them on our website for all of our stakeholders availability;
- Has created a website specific to COVID-19 Appendix K guidance, At a Glance, and resources for people in services, families, providers and direct support professionals
- Working in collaboration with stakeholders, including the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Coalition, to identify considerations for a reopening framework;
- Participating in national NASDDDS subgroups related to the Reopening of Day Services, which include:
 - Day and Transportation;
 - Fiscal Considerations;
 - Health and Safety; and
 - “Sunrise New Possibilities”;
- Utilizing data to make informed policy decisions and guidance by:
 - Sending out a Provider Survey to assess current staffing levels, capacity and other needs;
 - Sending out a family Survey to assess needs and concerns;
 - Analyzing state-wide COVID-19 trend data related to cases, deaths, outbreaks, etc.; and
 - Creating regional work groups to discuss reopening framework considerations; and
- Creating a framework of considerations for participants and their families, providers, and other stakeholders that will be shared in the coming weeks based on the above work of the subcommittees, CDC guidelines, state and local executive orders and guidance, stakeholder input and survey data analysis.

General Considerations for People and Families

- Review CDC guidance, as well as your local community’s current social distancing requirements and reopening guidance;
- Consider individual risk factors that may impact your personal decisions about accessing particular services and/or settings; and
- Continue engaging in conversations with your Coordinator of Community Services (CCS) and Service Provider(s) regarding current needs, service delivery options, flexibilities that exist such as when to return to particular services.

General Considerations for DDA Providers

- DDA will not be providing specific guidance or requirements related to reopening of services and/or sites and instead encourages each provider to create individual reopening plans, as appropriate;
- Providers should work to balance health and safety with those of individual choice, preference, needs and dignity of risk, using a person-centered approach;
- Providers should keep participants and their families, staff, participants’ Coordinators of Community Services and your DDA Regional Office Director up-to-date on any plans to reopen services that may have been closed in response to the COVID-19 crisis, by creating and sharing a reopening plan that considers, at the least:
 - Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations and guidelines;
 - State and local level orders, recommendations and guidelines;
 - Health and safety protocols, including how to monitor health of individuals/staff, use of personal protective equipment (PPE);

- Infection control and prevention for individuals and staff, including identification of risk factors and mitigation strategies for people in higher risk categories;
- Environmental assessment, cleaning and disinfection plans;
- Staffing plans;
- Physical distancing strategies;
- Training needs and strategies for participants, families, and staff;
- Transportation plan;
- Communications plan; and
- Use of innovative practices (*e.g.*, use of remote supports, telehealth, hybrid in-person/remote supports, and flexible and/or block scheduling)

Resources

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) COVID-19 Resources

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Maryland Coronavirus Main Resource Page

<https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>

Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) COVID-19 Resource Page

https://dda.health.maryland.gov/Pages/DDA_COVID-19_Information.aspx

Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education

<http://marylandpublicschools.org/newsroom/Documents/MSDERecoveryPlan.pdf>

Maryland's Roadmap to Recovery

https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/MD_Strong.pdf

cc: Patricia Sastoque, Director of Programs
Valerie Roddy, Director of Operations
Regional Directors
DDA Staff
Marlena Hutchinson, Acting Director, Office of Long Term Services and Supports