Tips For Working With Support Staff During COVID-19

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities wrote these tips. The Coronavirus or COVID-19 is changing our lives in many ways for a while. These tips can help you deal with the changes.

Nothing About Us, Without Us

- Talk directly to me. I want to be a part of all talks about me.
- Think about the words you use. People are using many new words. There is a list of words to know that goes with this booklet.

Make a Written Plan

Make a written plan with your case manager. Get a copy. Ask for details to be put on a calendar.

- ❑ Decide what you need help with.
- ❑ Decide when it needs to happen. Ask yourself, "Can I wait a couple of hours or wait a day or a week for this to happen?"
- ❑ Decide who will help you.
- ❑ Can staff help you over the phone? Or does it need to be in person?

Examples include:

- Meals: Can you heat up a prepared meal or do you need help preparing every meal?
- Showering: Do you need help every day or every 3 days?
- Grocery Shopping: Do you need help once a week or every 2 weeks?

- ❑ Include what to do if staff do not show up.
- ❑ List who to call if you need help. (Include family or friends.)

- ❑ Include what to do if you get sick. Who to call if you cannot reach your doctor.
- ❑ You and your case manager need to agree to this plan.
- ❑ Make sure you get it in writing.

How To Deal With New Support Staff

If you get new support staff:

- Your agency must tell you before it happens.
- Try to meet new staff over the phone first.
- Make a plan on how to train new support staff.
    1. What do you want them to know?
    2. Who can help you with the training?
    3. Go over your plan with your new support staff.

Being Safe When At Home

- Do not open your door to strangers. If they are new staff you will be told they are coming. Talk to someone you trust before giving away your food, money or other things.
- If my staff person is sick, what should I do?

❑ Doctors say sick people must stay home. A sick staff person should stay home until they are well.

❑ Tell your team. Tell your case manager.

- Look at the list of your emergency contact numbers at least once a week. Put them in your phone. Talk with your staff about:
  - ❑ When to call your doctor
  - ❑ When to call the agency crisis number
  - ❑ When to call 911

If You Get Sick

Attendant Care

Many people need help when they are sick. If you are sick and cannot take care of yourself call your case manager. They will help you set up services. Decide what is safe and what meets your needs.

PPE – Personal Protective Equipment - Germs get into a person's body through your nose, mouth and eyes. So, your staff may use:

- ❑ Gloves
- ❑ Masks
- ❑ Goggles or glasses
- ❑ Gown

Who is responsible for getting these supplies?

- If you get services from an agency - they will buy these things.
- If you manage your own services - you must buy these items.

Things To Ask Your Case Manager

- Put your case manager's number in your phone.
- If you live in a residential program:
  - ❑ Ask what will happen if you get the Coronavirus.
  - ❑ Ask what will happen if someone you live with gets it.

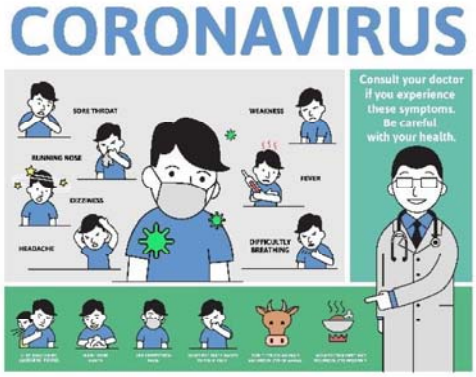
- If you have a job your case manager can help you stay in touch with your boss.
- If you are not working right now they can help you figure out how to pay your bills.

- Your case manager can help you apply for benefits to help people during the Coronavirus.
- Check your emergency fact sheet. Make sure it is up to date.

Med check:

- ❑ See how much medication you have.
- ❑ Know when you can get a refill.
- ❑ Find out if your meds can be delivered or mailed to you.
- ❑ Should you ask your doctor to order extra meds as a backup.

What is helpful?



The Coronavirus is changing our lives in many ways for a while. Staff should explain if they are using new ways to help you. Staff should often ask if you have any questions.

Some people live with their support person. If the support person gets sick, they must tell your case manager. If anyone in the house gets sick, the case manager must be told. You may be able to leave and stay somewhere else for a while.

What To Do If Someone You Live With Gets Sick?

- Stay away from the sick person. They should be in their own room. Do not go into their "sick" room.

- The sick person should wear a mask if they come out of their room.
- The sick person should have their own bathroom that no one else uses.

- Wash your hands with soap and water as much as you can.

Emotional Support

You may have lots of feelings during this time. You may feel lonely or worried. Life may be more stressful now. Make a list of things to do to bring down your stress level.

Try out new ways to keep in touch with family and friends.

Use this basic checklist when staff or friends call or stop by:

- ❑ What food do you have in your house?
- ❑ Check on what household supplies or medicines you have and what you need.

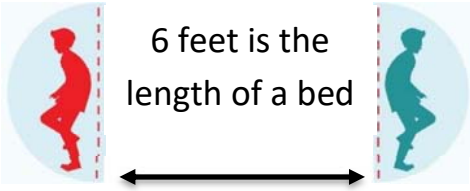
Talk about:

- ❑ Are you feeling sick?
- ❑ How are you sleeping?
- ❑ How are you feeling emotionally? Are you upset or worried?
- ❑ What things do you wish you had help with?

Staff Will Be Teaching You New Ways To Stay Healthy

Staff will support you to:

- Stay 6 feet away from others when in public.



- Cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Wash your hands often.
- Try not to touch your face.

- Use a phone or internet to talk to your therapist.
- Use a thermometer to take your temperature.

- Learn about the latest Coronavirus orders put out by your governor. Understand there are some things that are good ideas to do. And there are some things you have to do.

Protecting Rights

- Ask your case manager for the number for Protection and Advocacy in your state. Call them if you think you are not getting needed treatment. Also, call if you think a friend is not getting needed medical treatment.
- We need to speak up, so our support staff are treated fairly. Their rights as workers must be protected.

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