

July 6, 2021

Dear AABR Community:

It was recently announced that the State of Emergency put into effect during the COVID-19 Pandemic has come to an end, meaning all associated Executive Orders and most COVID-19 restrictions will also be lifted throughout the State. OPWDD has informed us that we can resume all pre-pandemic activities in compliance with all applicable rules and regulations.

Therefore, we are thrilled to announce that our residences are ready for community inclusion and unrestricted visitation. In addition, we are now making plans for a full reopening of our Day Programs, including the new Wellington Hall in Ozone Park.

However, while we are excited to reopen and start getting back to normal, please keep in mind that certain COVID-19 precautions will still be in place, particularly for those who have not been vaccinated. The following highlights are outlined in OPWDD's Post State of Emergency COVID-19 Guidance. For your reference, that full document is attached.

- Consistent with CDC guidance, fully vaccinated people are no longer required to wear masks or maintain social distance within OPWDD certified facilities.
 - Those individuals, staff, and visitors who are not vaccinated are still required to wear masks to the extent they can medically tolerate one and keep a safe social distance when possible.
- During transportation between facilities (ex. from a residence to a day program), all persons, regardless of vaccination status, must continue to wear facial coverings.
 - Capacity limitations will be removed during transportation if all individuals are vaccinated.
- High-touch surfaces will continue to be cleaned and sanitized consistent with CDC guidelines.
- We will immediately resume all mandatory training requirements for our staff that were paused during the Public Health Emergency.
- We must continue to report vaccination status of individuals and staff.

While the lifting of many of these regulations that were put in place to keep individuals and staff safe during the pandemic is a gigantic leap in the right direction, we understand that COVID is still a threat and will do everything in our power to keep them all healthy. We encourage all those who are physically able to be vaccinated do so as soon as they can. That is our best chance of getting 100% back to normal.

We are overjoyed that we are finally here, at the point that our individuals can get back into their communities and where they can reunite at day program with all of their friends from other residences they haven't seen in so long. We are absolutely elated that we can now fully allow individuals and families to talk, laugh, and hug together without restriction. Thank you for your patience and support.

Sincerely,



Libby Traynor, LCSW
Executive Director