



DPAO CONTINGENCY PLAN – S8617B/A10832

Purpose: NYS signed legislation requiring all public employers to create plans to adequately protect workers in the event of another state disaster emergency involving communicable diseases.

1. List and description of positions considered essential:

Definitions:

Non-essential employees are those who “do not need to be physically present to perform job functions or they are not required to meet the core function and programs of their agency during this emergency response.” In contrast, essential employees are defined as “anyone whose job function is essential to the effective operation of their agency or authority, or who must be physically present to perform their job, or who are involved in the COVID-19 emergency response.” On March 18th, OPWDD issued [guidance](#) clarifying that Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are considered essential and are integral employees to the agency’s programs and services. In support of this position, OPWDD pointed to [guidance](#) issued by the NYS Education Department on March 17th that classifies DSPs as essential health care workers.

List and Description:

Title	Description of Position
All DSPs – Direct Support Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides direct care to those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. • Performs personal care tasks including assistance with basic personal hygiene and grooming, feeding, ambulation, medical monitoring, and health care related tasks. • Ensures client safety and maintaining a safe environment.
Executive Director – Remote Ability	• Supports Essential Employees
Assistant Executive Director – Remote Ability	• Supports Essential Employees
Agency Nurse – Remote Ability	• Supports Essential Employees
Quality Assurance – Remote Ability	• Supports Essential Employees
FI Department – Remote Ability	• Supports Essential Employees
Waiver Specialist – Remote Ability	• Supports Essential Employees
Human Resources – Remote Ability	• Supports Essential Employees
Security / IT Officer – Remote Ability	• Supports Essential Employees
SEMP / PREVOC Supervisor – Remote Ability	• Supports Essential Employees
Financial Dept. Assistant – Remote Ability	• Supports Essential Employees
Payroll / Bookkeeper	• Supports Essential Employees

2. Description of protocols to follow to enable all non-essential employees to work remotely:

DSPs are essential workers and are required to be physically present. At this time the agency has identified critical staff who are essential to support the needs of the DSPs. They are identified in the list above. All other administrative staff are considered non-essential and do not have the ability to work remotely. At this time, the agency does not have the means to make all non-essential administrative staff remote. This is a costly endeavor and due to the pandemic, all programs are not working at full capacity to ensure the safety of staff and those served. Non-essential employees without remote access are required to be available during the work day and may have special assignments that do not involve PHI.

Protocols for Remote Employees:

- a. Remote employees are identified by the Executive Director.
- b. Remote employees are provided with a secure agency laptop that has been set up with remote ability by the IT contractor, NNY Online / Northern Computers.
- c. Remote employees are provided a locking document receptacle.
- d. Remote employees are required to sign the DPAO Remote Access Contract.

3. Description of how employers would stagger work shifts to reduce overcrowding:

Our agency has implemented preventative strategies to ensure that we provide an environment that optimizes everyone's health and safety while maintaining a comfortable and caring setting. We have put into effect all of the regulatory guidance from Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). We have developed a Safety Plan for each program that details our health and safety protocols. These are made available to you so that you have the necessary information to be able to make decisions about program participation. These can be found on our website at www.dpao.org. Each site is unique and has different strategies to reduce overcrowding.

- DPAO/COVID-19 Safety Plan for Certified Day Program Reopening
- DPAO/COVID-19 Safety Plan for 1 on 1 Community Hab Reopening
- DPAO/COVID-19 Safety Plan for 1 on 1 Day Hab Reopening
- DPAO/COVID-19 Safety Plan for 1 on 1 Respite Reopening
- DPAO/COVID-19 Safety Plan for Short Term Respite Reopening
- DPAO/COVID-19 Safety Plan for Free Standing Respite Reopening (Jefferson County)
- DPAO/COVID-19 Safety Plan for Free Standing Respite Reopening (Lewis County)

4. Protocols for PPE:

All program staff are required to wear a face covering at all times. Program staff have been provided with two reusable fabric face masks and disposable masks, per their choice.

All essential visitors are required to wear an adequate face covering. If they do not have a face covering, a disposable protective mask will be provided to them for the duration of their visit at no cost to them.

Each program currently has an adequate supply of PPE on site. This includes face coverings and gloves. Enhanced PPE is available. The agency R.N. monitors the PPE supply and reorders accordingly.

All staff and participants are educated on PPE safety. This includes how to correctly wear a face covering, how to safely remove a face covering, and how to effectively clean a face covering. This is included in the online LITMOS training, COVID-STOP THE SPREAD.

Refer to the following Policies, Procedures & Forms for additional guidance:

*Enhanced Infection Control Policy - 5/2020

*OPWDD Interim Guidance Regarding Reopening of Day Services - 7/10/2020

5. Protocol for when an employee is exposed to disease:

The agency ensures that all staff, participants, and essential visitors are screened for COVID-19 signs and symptoms. The agency has a policy and protocol in place ensuring that each person entering each site is documented and does the COVID-19 Health Screening Log which includes a temperature check and health questionnaire. These logs comply with all regulatory guidance and are reviewed and retained by the agency R.N. This is completed by the appropriate personnel and reviewed daily.

The agency ensures it will abide by all regulatory guidance and will send people home who are exhibiting COVID-19 signs and symptoms as soon as possible and safely separate them until they depart. This applies to all employees as well. A policy and procedure has been developed about the response to signs and symptoms and departure. All staff, participants, and caregivers have received notification on these

protocols. The agency R.N. will make the appropriate notifications to OPWDD and the local department of health per policy.

The agency has developed a policy that directs all staff to report any COVID-19 signs, symptoms, exposures, and testing to their immediate supervisor and the agency R.N. All staff and participants are unable to participate in programming if a member of their household is being quarantined. All OPWDD and DOH directives for fevers and quarantine periods are being followed.

Exposures, testing, and quarantine mandates are all registered in the OPWDD Incident Reporting Management Application.

Refer to the following Policies, Procedures & Forms for additional guidance:

- *Enhanced Infection Control Policy - 5/2020
- *Process of Entry to FSR Building - 8/2020
- *DPAO COVID-19 Health Screening for Participants
- *DPAO COVID-19 Health Screening for Staff
- *DPAO COVID-19 Health Screening for Essential Visitors
- *DPAO Return to Program Form - 8/2020
- *OPWDD Operational Instructions for Agency Contact Tracing
- *COVID-19 Notifications & IRMA Requirements for OPWDD Providers

6. Protocol for documenting hours and work locations for essential workers:

The agency documents hours and work location for Direct Support Professional by using MAINS'L EVV system. EVV stands for Electronic Visit Verification. EVV is a system that may include multiple point-of-care verification technologies, such as telephonic, mobile, and web-based verification inputs. The system electronically verifies the occurrence of home-or community-based service visits, identifying the time that service provision begins and ends to ensure accurate claims disbursement and safeguarding that beneficiaries who are authorized to receive services get the expected care. EVV is used to verify visits on a real-time basis, including date, location, type of service, individual(s) providing and receiving services, and duration of service(s) and to validate hours of work for Direct Support Professional's (DSP). This applies to those DSP's that provide community based services such as Community Habilitation and in home Respite. Essential employees located at site based programs and administration staff submit weekly time cards to document hours and program worked.

7. **Protocol for working with essential employees localities for identifying emergency housing if needed:**

N/A

8. **Any other requirement determined by the New York State Department of Health, such as testing and contract tracing:**

The agency has an enhanced infection control policy that provides guidance on tracing and tracking COVID-19 related health issues.

The agency follows all OPWDD, NYS, and CDC guidelines.

These guidelines are provided to all programs in the Safety Plan binders. These binders contain all the necessary resources and contacts that staff may need in the event of any exposure.

Exposures, testing and quarantine mandates are all registered in the OPWDD Incident Reporting Management Application.

Refer to the following Policies, Procedures & Forms for additional guidance:

- *Enhanced Infection Control Policy - 5/2020
- *DPAO Return to Program Form - 8/2020
- *OPWDD Operational Instructions for Agency Contact Tracing
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SEE AGENCY COMMUNICATION RESPONSE PLAN ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

DPAO COMMUNICATION RESPONSE PLAN

The agency has implemented a Communication Response Plan in the event of an agency emergency or closing.

1. The Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, Quality Assurance, and any other agency personnel needed will communicate to identify issues and create a message, dependent on the situation.
2. The use of text messages has been found to be an effective initial tool to inform both staff and participants.
3. Quality Assurance will send out the message to all Department Heads and key staff to ensure that all applicable staff are informed immediately. The Emergency Protocol for DPAO Closing will be used as a chain reaction to inform agency personnel.
4. Every employee knows to share the information with their entire department to ensure communication is complete. See the Emergency Response for Agency Closing chart.
5. Employees will be updated this way throughout the crisis to inform them of any changes or directives to follow.
6. An agency wide notice (email/text) will go out to provide everyone with updated information and what our agency response is. This way all employees called upon to answer questions have the appropriate knowledge and response. For example, the Fundraising Department answers many of the agency calls and will need current information and the approved message from the agency to respond appropriately.
7. If some or all buildings are closed then the Fundraising Department will call in and change the message to inform the public of what is happening. If just one program or one building is closed, then others can answer the phones and they will be given detailed information of what to say.
8. In the event of a closing or crisis, Fundraising will work to get the narrative out to the public through local media outlets and social media, such as Facebook. All PSA's need to have the Executive Director's approval.
9. Signs will be posted on applicable buildings if they are closed with pertinent information and contacts. The maintenance department will have access to the signs and will be in charge of placing them accordingly. Three signs will go to the Lewis County site and be put up by the Free Standing Respite Supervisor.
10. If the event impacts the services of participants, the same process will be followed. Quality Assurance will assist programs to inform participants, their caregivers, and Care Managers.

See [Emergency Protocol for DPAO Closing](#) on the following page

Emergency Protocol for DPAO Closing

In the event of an emergency or inclement weather and DPAO must close, this phone tree will be utilized to inform staff of all information pertaining to the occurrence. Closings will be posted on local media websites, television and can be heard on local radio stations.
 (315) 782-3577 DPAO Concerts/Facebook www.dpao.org

