

The New Jersey Department of Human Services
Division of Developmental Disabilities

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CORONAVIRUS DISEASE
(COVID-19)
UPDATE FOR FAMILIES AND
PROVIDERS

November 25, 2020



Agenda

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- COVID-19
- December Webinars
- Guidance Updates
- Closure of Congregate Day Services
- Field Work Adjustments
- Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings
- SDE Pre-Employment Screenings
- Fight the Flu!

New Jersey COVID-19 Current Statistics*

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State of New Jersey	
Positive	313,863
Deaths	15,007

**This update is as of Wednesday, November 25, 2020.*

For regular updates: <https://covid19.nj.gov/>

Consider downloading COVID Alert NJ on your Apple or Android smartphone:

<https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/app>



DDD Specific COVID-19 Statistics*

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	Community		Developmental Centers	Total
	Licensed	Own Home		
Positive	875	203	487	1,565
Deaths	62	32	41	135

DDD-specific statistics are updated weekly. Community data includes individuals **actively under DDD services in settings such as group homes, supervised apartments, out of state, and own-home settings.*

Full detail, including data for individuals not under services for whom reporting is voluntary and provided for informational purposes only, can be found at [NJ Department of Human Services COVID-19 Information](#).

DDD December Webinar Schedule

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- December update webinars:
 - Thursday, December 10, 2020 – 10:30 am
 - Wednesday, December 23, 2020 – 10:30 am
- Registration **must be completed separately** for each webinar date:
 - [Register for December 10 Webinar](#)
 - [Register for December 23 Webinar](#)

Guidance Updates

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- Temporary Closure of Congregate Day Services has been updated to outline the five impacted services: Career Planning; Community Inclusion; Day Habilitation; Pre-Vocational Training (Group); Supported Employment (Group).
- Temporary Service Modifications has been updated with additional detail around Supported Employment.

Closure of Congregate Day Services

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- The Division has made the difficult decision to close day programs for a second time.
- This will be effective close of business November 25, 2020 through at least January 19, 2021.
- Modified services can provided to and received by individuals, per the Division's updated [Temporary Service Modifications](#) guidance.
- In-person one-to-one (*non-congregate*) services can continue so long as individual/guardian agree and proper precautions are taken to reduce COVID-19 infection (e.g., use of PPE).

Closure of Congregate Day Services

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- The closure applies to the following day services, both facility-based and those typically provided in an outdoor setting:
 - Career Planning
 - Community Inclusion
 - Day Habilitation
 - Prevocational Training-Group
 - Supported Employment-Group

Closure of Congregate Day Services

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- State supplemental payments to closed congregate day service providers will continue.
- When congregate day services re-open, the previously-distributed Congregate Day Program Re-Opening Requirements will be used.
- The closure of day services does not apply to individuals who work competitively in the community and who may be receiving Supported-Employment-Individual Support services.

Field Work Adjustments

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- DDD's Provider Performance and Monitoring Unit will pause day program drop-ins due to closures.
- DDD's Community Care Residence Unit has moved to contactless oversight of sponsor homes.
- The Office of Program Integrity and Accountability within the Department of Human Services will pause all non-emergent face-to-face interactions.
- **In all cases, in-person interaction will be completed in emergent circumstances.**

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- The 2020 Holiday Season is upon us at the same time a surge in COVID-19 positivity is impacting New Jersey. Many are asking about visitation during this time.
- The Department of Human Services and DDD support an individual's right to engage with family and friends in visitation outside of the licensed community residential setting, but are asking everyone to work together to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- The virus that causes COVID-19 is easily transmitted, especially in group settings.
- Many residents have underlying health conditions that make them particularly vulnerable to suffering the most serious complications of COVID-19 infection, including death.
- Additionally, those individuals without underlying health conditions often reside with housemates or work with staff who do.

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- DDD strongly recommends against individuals **and staff** engaging in holiday celebrations and gatherings with those they do not live with.
- DDD is directing all residential service providers to provide as many opportunities as possible for visitation that adheres to [Guidance for Residential Providers on Visits with Family and Friends](#).

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- For those who weigh the benefit of visitation outside of a licensed community residential setting with those they do not live and elect to do so:
 - Instead of visits with family and friends off-site of a licensed community residential setting, the Division recommends visitation outdoors at the residence, or possibly indoors so long as it is permitted per existing standards.
 - Telephone and video conferencing visits are also an option.

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- Families and friends who elect to take an individual off-site of a licensed community residential setting must make arrangements with the residential provider.
 - ✦ The individual must be quarantined for 14 days upon return;
 - ✦ If the individual resides alone or lives in a residence with others but does not share a bedroom, they may be quarantined there. Separation from other residents is required. Capacity of an individual to isolate must be considered;

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- ✦ If the individual has a *shared* bedroom, they should be quarantined in an alternate location away from others upon their return;
- ✦ If another location is not available, the provider shall notify the family that the individual will not be able to return to the program until an alternate location to quarantine for 14 days becomes available.
- ✦ All efforts shall be made to provide a timeframe in which another quarantine location may be available.
- ✦ In some cases, the residential agency may not be able to provide a realistic alternate location;

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- Licensed community residential settings should develop and implement a plan, in preparation for the return of residents whose family or friends who engage in holiday visits/gatherings, that includes the following:
 - ✦ Based on available space, estimate how many residents can be isolated for 14 days in their own unshared bedroom or alternate location from November 25, 2020 through January 1, 2021. Consider PPE, available staffing and the ability of the individual to cooperate with isolation.
 - ✦ If an unshared bedroom or alternate space is absolutely not possible to provide for quarantine, this shall be communicated to the individual and the family/friend requesting the visit.

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- ✦ Establish a sign-up process for residents and families to make reservations.
- ✦ Specific dates, including the number of hours if less than a day or the number of days requested to be off-site are required.
- ✦ Create a waiting list for those who request a reservation after the established limit has been reached.

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- ✦ Individuals who leave without a reservation or who are on a waiting list may not be guaranteed readmission to the location at the end of their scheduled off-site visit.
- ✦ Family members and/or friends may be required to care for the individual until there is room for them to be quarantined. Families/friends must plan for this and be prepared to provide the care for the length of time it may be needed.

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- ✦ Require the individual/family to certify that:
 - They are aware of the possible dangers of exposure to COVID-19 for the individual/family/friend and those the individual resides with;
 - They will follow masking, social distancing and hand hygiene practices pursuant to CDC and NJDOH directives during the off-site visit; and
 - They will notify the licensed community residential setting if anyone present at the holiday celebration and/or gathering tests positive for COVID-19 or exhibits symptoms within 14 days of the off-site visit.

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- ✦ The licensed community residential settings should obtain a signed certification from the individual and their family member and/or friend taking them off-site memorializing these requirements.
- ✦ If the individual is unable to consent then consent from their guardian is required. A copy of the certification shall be provided to the individual/family/friend and maintained by the residential agency.

Visitation in Licensed Residential Settings

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- At no time shall an individual be barred from participating in a holiday event or gathering. However, restrictions that may exist on readmission shall be communicated so that an informed decision can be made by those involved.

SDE Pre-Employment Screenings

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- At the onset of the pandemic, timeframes were extended for some mandated pre-employment screenings for self-directed employees (SDEs). Those extensions are still in place; however, **all SDEs are required to complete all pre-employment screenings within the extended timeframe.**
- Mandatory pre-employment screenings with temporarily extended timeframes are:
 - ✦ Fingerprinting
 - ✦ Drug testing
 - ✦ CARI check application

SDE Pre-Employment Screenings

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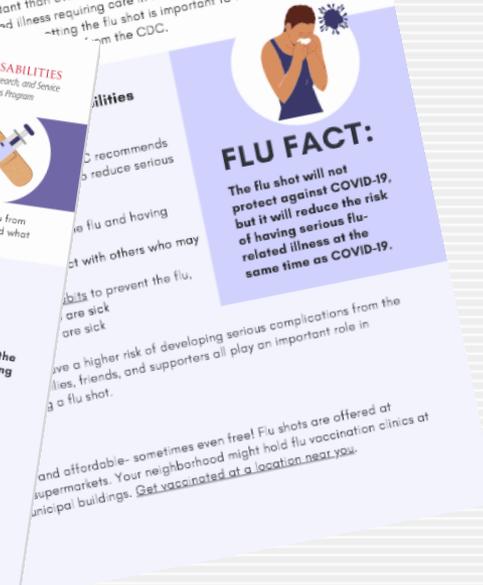
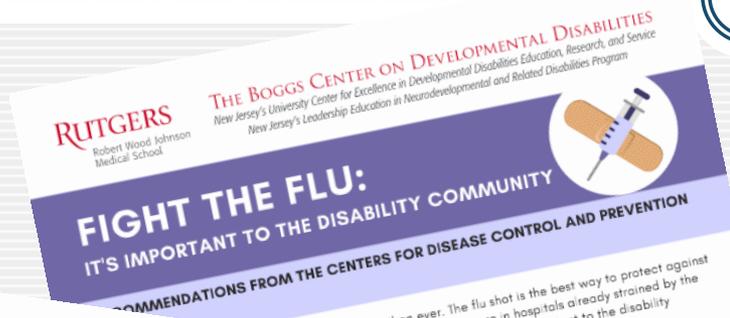
- **Beginning January 1, 2021**, SDEs who have not completed fingerprinting, drug testing and CARI check application within the 120-day grace period from their date of hire will have their employment status and payments suspended.
 - Once all screenings have been completed, payments will be authorized to resume **as of the date of screening completion**.
 - **Back pay will not be issued to SDEs** for the period of time in which employment status was suspended.

Fight the Flu

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Fight the Flu Fact Sheet & Social Story

Available on
The Boggs Center's [Fight
the Flu](#) website.



Important Resources

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- [NJ Department of Health](#)
24-Hour Hotline: 1 (800) 222-1222
- [NJ Department of Human Services COVID-19 Information](#)
- Contact information for [Local Health Departments in NJ](#)
- Contact information for [County OEM Coordinators in NJ](#)

Important Resources

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- Disability Rights New Jersey
 - 1-800-922-7233 (toll-free in New Jersey only)
- Ombudsman for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and their Families
 - 1-609-984-7764
- New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities
 - 1-800-792-8858

Important Resources

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- For assistance during this time:
 - For issues, call the Division Community Services office for your county or 1 (800) 832-9173.
 - When calling, you will be connected with the Division's answering service who will take information about the circumstance and have a Division staff person reach out.
 - For routine questions: DDD.FeeForService@dhs.nj.gov
 - For COVID-related questions: DDD.COVID-19@dhs.nj.gov
 - To report suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation: call 1 (800) 832-9173, then press 1.

Highlighted Resources

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- For individuals, families and caregivers
 - [Boggs Center COVID-19 Information and Resources](#)
- For individuals:
 - NJ Self-Advocacy Project's [Stay Healthy at Home Webinar Series](#)
- For Direct Support Professionals
 - [National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals \(NADSP\) COVID-19 Toolkit for DSPs](#)
 - [CDC Guidance for Direct Service Providers](#)