

OPTIONS OF LINN COUNTY

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LinnCounty.org



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To Clients, Families, and Options Stakeholders:

At long last, we are finally gearing up to serve clients in our Day Habilitation Program. In an effort to be as safe as possible, we are going to start slow with a limited number of clients and staff, and then **as we learn from the experience, gradually increase the numbers. We are working closely with the Linn County Public Health Department and will be implementing their recommendations to limit potential exposures and spread of the Coronavirus.** We have developed a schedule, but please keep in mind that circumstances may force us to reassess the dates.

We have made the decision that the first group of clients will primarily be from the group homes. They have been living together and taking steps to keep themselves safe as a group and we believe that experience will help them to accept the new safety measures here and get us off to a successful start. We have contacted those clients and families and we hope to begin serving them on Wednesday, July 29.

In the next phase we will continue to access group living clients, but also begin calling back clients **that live with their family members and mentors. Here are some things everyone needs to be aware of as we expand. Options is a union shop and staff will be called back based on their seniority.** This means that staff traditionally assigned to a specific Area may need to work a different Area and with **different clients until enough clients and staff are back that we can open their original Area.** It also means clients may be temporarily assigned to a different staff person and Area until their regular area **can be opened.** We hope to begin this phase in mid-August and **grow the program to 48 clients.** In phase 3, we plan to get to 72 clients and begin in mid-September. By the end of October, we hope to **be serving 90 clients.** At this point we will assess how we are doing in regards to social distancing and consider going to two sessions per day.

As a reminder, these are the new procedures we plan to implement to limit virus exposure:

1. Begin small, with the clients that are more independent and want to come back and recall staff **as needed based on the number of clients. Gradually increase each. When it becomes difficult to maintain social distancing, begin planning to implement two sessions per day.**
2. Clients will enter directly into their assigned areas. Sanitation and temperature stations will be inside each door. Transporters will need to wait until their person has been approved to **stay.** We would prefer that MCOs be advised that clients should not arrive via cab.
3. Clients will be assigned **to one staff person for the entire day. Each staff will have a clearly defined area that they will work in.**
4. Clients should limit what they bring. Only meal/snack items.
5. **Staff will wear masks. We will also consider face shields.** All clients will be encouraged and reminded to wear and keep masks on.
6. Sanitation will include initial hand washing/sanitizer upon arrival. Routine hand sanitizing breaks (every 20 or 30 minutes), and surface sanitation as needed but at least every

hour. Programming items used will be composed of materials that can be easily sanitized. **Complete building sanitization daily per facilities staff.**

7. Work with Linn County Public Health Department on a policy of responding and managing if there is a positive case.

I want to encourage you to contact Options and let us know what your expectations for return to programming are. **Please contact me by phone or email so we can fill in the program slots as we are beginning the process of determining the clients that will be part of Phase 2 and beyond.** We want to know your thoughts about conditions that must be met.

I am attaching a copy of the COVID-19 policy that we have developed with input from the Linn County Public Health Department **and the County Attorney.** **Please review and contact me with questions. We will need a signed copy for our files.**

Jim Fox
Options Director

Options of Linn County Procedures to Address the Coronavirus Pandemic

Policy

Options is committed to providing a safe environment for both clients and staff. This is especially challenging during an international pandemic. At all times, we will be following guidelines recommended by the Linn County Department of Public Health, and state and federal regulations, in an effort to reduce risk and limit exposure.

Procedure

1) Client Illness

Any client that exhibits any symptoms of illness related to Covid 19 (cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and/or loss of taste or smell) should stay home. If a client arrives with symptoms, or develops symptoms while here, they will be escorted to the nurse's office by the client's Direct Support Staff (DSS) and/or Program Manager. In attempting to understand a client's complaint, the client may be asked questions regarding how he/she feels; vital signs may be taken; and staff members will report relevant observations of and conversations with the client. If a consumer's temperature is 100° F. or above, or they are exhibiting respiratory symptoms, the parent, guardian, or residential provider will be contacted and asked to pick up the client and take him/her home. If a client has obvious symptoms of illness or a level of participation that is noticeably reduced, he/she cannot remain at Options, regardless of temperature. Options' Nurse and a Program Manager, after a period of observation, will make a decision as to whether or not a client should be sent home. Confidentiality about the illness will be maintained at all times, according to state law and HIPAA regulations.

If a client is sent home due to Corona virus symptoms, the parents/residential providers will be responsible for having the client tested for corona virus. If positive, this will be reported to the Linn County Department of Health. Based on their review and recommendations, clients and staff that worked with the client that tested positive may have to self-isolate. The period of self-isolation will be determined by the Linn County Department of Health.

2) Preventative Measures

- As Options reopens, the program will begin small, with the clients that are more independent and want to come back and recall staff as needed based on the number of clients. **Gradually increase each. When it becomes difficult to maintain social distancing, begin planning to implement two sessions per day.**
- **Clients will enter directly into their assigned areas. Sanitation and temperature stations will be inside each door.** We prefer that transporters wait until their person has been approved to stay. We would also prefer that MCOs be advised that clients should not arrive via cab.
- Clients will be assigned to one staff person for the entire day. Each staff will have a clearly defined area that they will work in.

- **Clients should limit what they bring. Only meal/snack items.**
- **Staff will wear masks. We will also consider shields.** All clients will be expected to wear masks and in an effort to achieve this, clients will be encouraged, reminded, and inspired to wear and keep masks on.
- **Sanitation will include initial hand washing/sanitizer upon arrival. Routine hand sanitizing breaks (every 20 or 30 minutes), and surface sanitation as needed but at least every hour. Programming items used will be composed of materials that can be easily sanitized. Complete building sanitization daily per facilities staff.**

I have reviewed the above policy/procedure related to Covid 19 and my participation in the Options Program. I understand that Options will be following guidance from the Linn County Department of Health and that these steps can not eliminate the risk of anyone catching the corona virus, but are designed to limit exposure.

Client/Guardian

Date