



Reducing Exposure to COVID-19 Updated Information - April 21, 2020

As the COVID-19 pandemic has touched the New Horizons Family, I wanted to provide insight we have learned from our collective experiences as well as those experiences world-wide. This means reducing exposure in every way possible (whether doing so is mandated or not). In an effort to mitigate the transmission and reduce the exposure of COVID-19, NHR will implement the following practices to ensure our risk is as low as reasonably achievable (ALARA):

- Masks should be worn at all times for the entirety of the shift (there seems to be increasing evidence that the virus may be aerosolized.)
- **Health screening will be done at the beginning of each shift and every twelve (12) hours thereafter. All vitals will be documented (temperature and blood oxygen levels) in the staff screening log. Blood oxygen levels are taken with the pulse ox.**
- When we report to work and during the screening process, we need to ensure that we are wearing gloves and masks and are ensuring that the thermometer is sanitized. As soon as the temperature screening has been completed the thermometer is sanitized again before securing.
- Ensure that we are not taking medications for "aches" prior to the screening as it may mask a fever.
- Ensure that we are washing our hands and changing gloves in between all screenings.
- If you develop a fever or symptoms during your shift, immediately contact the AOD.
- Develop a separate work wardrobe. When you arrive at work leave your coat and purse in your vehicle.
- When your shift has ended for the day, ensure that you shower and launder your clothes; take off your shoes before entering your home.
- Disinfect your vehicle frequently.
- Ensure that all non-perishables are kept outside of the home for minimally 24 hours before bringing into the house. If possible leave in a garage.
- Wear gloves when getting the mail. (If possible spray with Lysol.)

Always:

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched items (door knobs, keyboards, Fobs, chair backs, phones, light switches).
- Disinfect ALL medical supplies: pulse ox, blood pressure cuff, thermometer, face shields
- If the weather permits, open the windows for ventilation.
- Weather permitting, get the folks outside 6 feet apart.
- Do not use nebulizers in common areas of the home. Nebulizer treatments should be done in the person's bedroom.

- Always use the dishwasher and ensure it is on the “heated drying” setting.
- **Health checks should be implemented for all individuals; Check each individual at least once daily, and as needed, for fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, and document findings.**

What to expect when working with someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19:

- When someone is diagnosed with COVID-19, we need to ensure that the person is safe as well as mitigating any exposures to others.
- We mitigate exposure through isolation / quarantining.
 - People should remain in their own personal space.
 - Meals should be eaten in bedrooms. Use disposable plates and silverware.
- Your team will designate clean areas of the home. In those areas there will be a heightened awareness to keep anything potentially contaminated and persons’ who have or suspected of having COVID-19 away and out of the “clean area.”
- Individuals diagnosed with COVID-19 should not share bedrooms or bathrooms with others who have not been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- There will be a designated area to don and doff PPE.
- Wear all PPE (protective personal equipment) when entering the room. This includes: gowns, N95 face mask, face shield, gloves.
 - Think about all items you will need before entering a room; (for example, do you have the utensils, drink, and napkin when you are bringing their meal).
- **Ensure that you are checking vitals once per shift (or more frequently if directed by nursing.) This monitoring must include a COVID-related symptom screen and temperature check. The site should maintain a written log of this data for later review.**
- Use pillows to elevate the person’s head when in bed.
- It is important to help people remain active. Having people up and out of bed as tolerated will promote healthy lungs.
- Ensure that you are donning and doffing the PPE as instructed.
- Changing gloves frequently and ALWAYS in between tasks and individuals.
- Do not float staff between individuals, to the extent possible. Minimize the number of staff entering individuals’ rooms.
- Disinfect all surfaces frequently.
- If weather permits, open the bedroom window to assist with ventilation.

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