



AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING COVID-19 FROM KELLY A. PETTY, SUPERINTENDENT & CEO

For immediate release: March 12, 2020

The Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Cuyahoga DD) has been and will continue to monitor the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak with guidance from local, state and federal government agencies. The health, safety and well-being of the people we serve, employees, and other stakeholders remain our top priority. Despite the many implications of COVID-19, **Cuyahoga DD is committed to continuing to serve people with developmental disabilities in Cuyahoga County.**

The following guidelines are effective as of March 13, 2020 and will remain in effect as long as necessary. These guidelines have been developed to protect the health and safety of people served and their families as well as Cuyahoga DD employees. These guidelines are subject to change pending new or revised guidance issued by local, state and/or federal government agencies. Any update to this correspondence will be made available if changes occur.

PREVENTION:

Preventing the spread of COVID-19 is the responsibility of each of us. Be sure to follow all recommendations from the Ohio Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stop handshaking – use other methods of greeting.

ILLNESS:

If you are ill, it is the expectation of Cuyahoga DD that you stay home. Employees may use accrued sick time or other leave time. Cuyahoga DD is exploring temporary work-from-home options for qualified positions. Details regarding this will be available to employees soon.

CLEANING PROTOCOLS:

Cuyahoga DD's building operations department is taking extra measures to ensure the health and sanitation of all Cuyahoga DD facilities. Current measures include cleaning common surfaces more frequently and with a stronger cleaning/disinfectant product and providing hand sanitizer and sani-wipes for employees and visitors.

ROUTINE HOME VISITS AND VISITS TO COMMUNITY LOCATIONS:

Cuyahoga DD will reduce face-to-face contacts by suspending routine home visits and visits to community locations by Cuyahoga DD employees. However, Cuyahoga DD will conduct routine business by telephone and virtual visits, in place of face-to-face visits. Face-to-face visits will only be held for urgent or emergency matters as determined on a case-by-case basis. Routine visits include, but are not limited to, home visits and evaluations offered through the Early Intervention program, eligibility determinations, visits to group homes and supported living settings, visits to schools, and other types of non-emergency/routine visits that occur in community locations. All Cuyahoga DD staff will continue to be available by telephone and email.

MEETINGS & GATHERINGS:

Cuyahoga DD will not host any non-mission critical meetings, gatherings or events as long as this guidance is in effect. Likewise, Cuyahoga DD employees will not be required to attend any non-mission critical meetings, gatherings or events. (Supervisors will assist employees in determining the types of meetings considered to be non-mission critical.)

VOLUNTEERS:

All volunteer activities, including the Community Friend program, are suspended. Volunteers will be notified when this suspension has been lifted.

COMMUNICATION:

We want people to have the most up-to-date information. This is available on the home page of the Cuyahoga DD website (www.CuyahogaBDD.com), where there is a link to COVID-19 Information & Resources. This links directly to local, state and federal resources specific to COVID-19. (A copy of this correspondence can also be found there.)

Cuyahoga DD's provider development and quality department is in continuous contact with the local DD provider community, working proactively to assure there is as little disruption as possible to people being served by provider agencies.

Cuyahoga DD remains committed to continuing to serve people with developmental disabilities in Cuyahoga County. If you have a need or question, please contact us by calling 216-241-8230 Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM or 216-694-7077 all other days and times. You may also use the 'Contact Us' option on our website (www.CuyahogaBDD.org).

FLEXIBILITY:

Recognizing that the COVID-19 situation is evolving, guidelines cannot cover every possibility. Individual circumstances and decisions will vary and will require the attention and input of others. Cuyahoga DD requests that people served, their families, employees, providers, and other stakeholders be flexible during this critical time.

THANK YOU. Cuyahoga DD appreciates the commitment and expertise of our health departments and others working to address the many challenges associated with COVID-19. If I can be of assistance to you, please contact me.



Kelly A. Petty, Superintendent & CEO

216-736-2731

Petty.Kelly@CuyahogaBDD.org