



June 12, 2020

It's been since late March that Governor DeWine temporarily closed facility-based Adult Day Supports (ADS) in Ohio in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over these past few months, discussions and planning have occurred and continue at the state and local levels in preparation for the re-opening of ADS program and related services. Maintaining the health and safety of all has been at the forefront of all discussions and planning efforts.

The Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Cuyahoga DD) would like to take this opportunity to update you on the current status of ADS programs and transportation services, new service options available, and how Cuyahoga DD is supporting providers prepare to re-open day program facilities. Helping you decide which option is best for you and planning accordingly remains a priority. We're here for you!

**What is the current status of facility-based Adult Day Supports (ADS)?**

Providers of facility-based ADS programs have been and are currently permitted to operate as long as they have 10 or fewer people (including staff) in any confined area.

**When and how will facility-based Adult Day Supports' programs re-open?**

Providers must first obtain permission from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities to re-open and must demonstrate they can maintain safety within the facility, following all guidelines issued by public health authorities. Many providers in Cuyahoga County are currently making plans to re-open after carefully considering the new requirements they must meet. This information is shared with Cuyahoga DD staff so we are aware of all providers who have been approved to operate.

**What is Cuyahoga DD's role in the re-opening of Adult Day Supports (ADS)?**

A Cuyahoga DD Support Administrator (SA) must authorize services. The SA is responsible for facilitating a discussion with the person and his/her planning team around risk factors and the person's ability to abide by health and safety guidelines, like social distancing.

Cuyahoga DD has been in regular communication with ADS providers, helping them to understand requirements and the planning process that will occur with people interested in attending a facility-based ADS program when they re-open. Cuyahoga DD has also created an opportunity for providers to be reimbursed for unusual and extraordinary expenses they have incurred related to COVID-19.

**Is there a recommendation on who should return to a facility-based Adult Day Supports (ADS) program first?**

Cuyahoga DD believes that people who live alone or with family should be considered first for returning to an ADS program. (People who live in group, residential settings may be at or pose a higher risk because they live with other people.) However, anyone interested in returning to an ADS program should contact his/her Support Administrator.

### **Are there other options instead of a facility-based program?**

Yes. Adult Day Supports (ADS) and Vocational Habilitation (VH) services can now be authorized differently for people who for a variety of reasons cannot or do not want to return to a facility. Start Toward Emerging Possibilities (or STEP) is a new model for non-facility-based ADS and VH services. Under the STEP model, services are delivered in much smaller (no more than four people), more integrated community-based settings. There are three different ways ADS and VH services can be delivered, with each allowing for services to be delivered in small groups of no more than four people at the same time.

- 1- In-person in a person's home
- 2- In-person in integrated settings (not a person's home or day service location)
- 3- Using technology to directly interact with the person (also known as a virtual visit)

The STEP model provides the opportunity for brief periods of respite for caregivers while allowing the person to continue to make progress on ISP goals while remaining safely at home.

Examples of some activities that may be available under STEP include:

- Recreational activities to keep people active while at home
- Job/vocational skills training
- Technology instruction to teach skills and to connect people to family and friends
- Identifying and exploring educational opportunities
- Community outings in small groups
- Other ADS or VH activities that align to the ISP

Your Support Administrator (SA) and person-centered planning team can help you decide if the STEP model is a good option for you.

### **I'm interested in returning to a facility-based Adult Day Supports (ADS) program.**

#### **What should I do?**

People wishing to return to a facility-based ADS program should notify their Support Administrator and consult with their planning team. Various risk factors should be considered prior to someone returning to an ADS program, including one's current health/underlying conditions, ability to abide by new health and safety guidelines and where and with whom a person lives.

#### **What is the current status of group employment?**

Providers of group employment services are also making plans to re-start as soon as possible. People interested in this should check with their Support Administrator.

#### **What is the current status of transportation services?**

Current social distancing guidelines (staying at least 6 feet apart) apply to transportation too. This creates a significant challenge and drastically limits the number of people who can be transported at the same time. There is much discussion occurring about this at the state level. In the meantime, family members are sometimes transporting people and providers are making multiple trips in order to abide by guidelines.

#### **I have questions. Who should I contact?**

Please contact our Support Administrator (SA). Your SA is available to answer your questions and help you plan. If you don't have an SA, please call 216-241-8230.