

Dear Families and Friends,

We hope you are continuing to stay safe during these times. ADAPT Community Network continues to evaluate the current circumstances in order to best meet the needs of those we support, including visitation to or from their loved ones.

Back in March 2020, we had to make the difficult decision to temporarily suspend all visitation to our residential programs. We are thankful that some of you were still able to connect with your loved ones through technology and recognized how hard it was on both you and them not to visit and actually see one another. Thankfully, in June 2020, in accordance with guidance from New York State and the Department of Health, we were able to revise this procedure and allow in-person visits with all the safe mitigation factors in place, including health screenings, PPE, social distancing, etc. We know it was exciting for you and your loved one to see each other during these last few months, and we thank you for your continued cooperation with this.

I am writing to you today to update you on a change to our visitation procedure during the COVID-19 pandemic. As you may know, New York State and the Department of Health have released new guidelines regarding Designated Zones (Micro-Clusters) as a part of New York State's Cluster Action Initiative. OPWDD sent a guidance memo on 10/23/2020, which gave very specific guidelines for these micro-clusters with regards to visitation. We have also attached that memo for your review. After reviewing these guidelines and based on the information in them, we have made the following changes to our visitation procedure:

- ***For all homes located in a Designated Red or Orange Zone, visitation will temporarily be suspended.***
- ***For all other homes, visitation will continue in accordance with our current procedure.***
- ***For all homes, if a potential visitor lives in a Designated Red or Orange Zone, they will not be able to visit. This will be part of the screening questions that are currently asked before each visit.***
- ***To continue to ensure the safety of people supported and employees, all visits will remain at the discretion of ADAPT Community Network.***

You can look up if you or your loved one is currently in a Designated Zone by going to:  
<https://covidhotspotlookup.health.ny.gov/#/home>.

We also invite you to join us for a Virtual Family Advisory Meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm. For more information on this, please contact Karen Liebman at [kliebman@adaptcommunitynetwork.org](mailto:kliebman@adaptcommunitynetwork.org).

As you know, this situation is ever-changing, and we continue to do all we can to continue to keep your loved ones and staff safe during the pandemic. You can also check for updated information and updates with our continued response to COVID-19 at <https://www.adaptcommunitynetwork.org/covid-19/>.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and patience. Please reach out to your Program Director if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
ADAPT Community Network



October 23, 2020

## Interim COVID-19 Guidance: Designated Cluster Mitigation and Oversight

The Governor and the NYS Department of Health (DOH) have begun to identify geographic areas with higher than average rates of COVID-19 transmission, referred to as “hot spots,” “clusters,” and “micro clusters.” The risk of transmission is characterized by three colors (red, orange and yellow) and the level of mitigation management is increased as geographic areas demonstrate higher rates of infection and move along the continuum from yellow to orange to red.

Programs and facilities certified or operated by the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), located within such designated geographic areas, will immediately be subject to the following additional mitigation and oversight measures. These restrictions are required in addition to all other applicable OPWDD COVID-19 guidance.

### 1. Provider Notification

Upon designation by the Governor of a geographic COVID-19 cluster, or upon the change of any such designation, OPWDD will notify providers operating programs within the designated area to ensure that the provider is aware of the high rate designation and is taking all appropriate precautions. This notification will be made as part of OPWDD’s risk stratified enhanced oversight as well as review of any previous COVID visits to determine the need for any oversight actions required for that program.

### 2. Enhanced Testing

All providers offering services within a designated area of concern will be required to refer staff and individuals served for COVID-19 testing on a weekly basis and to strongly encourage/facilitate such testing. The use of rapid molecular tests (i.e. the Abbott ID NOW) may be considered when testing individuals and/or staff associated with congregate settings such as group homes and day programs, in addition to lab-based molecular testing. More information regarding the interim recommendations for use of molecular testing during the COVID-19 public health emergency is available at: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-testing>.

All positive testing results are required to be reported to OPWDD using the Incident Report and Management Application (IRMA).

### 3. Program Suspension/Reduction

In those geographic areas with the highest rate of transmission (designated as a “red” or “orange” geographic cluster), site-based day services will be temporarily suspended. Community-based group services in those same geographic regions will be temporarily

reduced in capacity. Capacity reductions are inclusive of individuals receiving services and staff needed to operate such programs.

Restrictions will continue, consistent with the NYS DOH closure restrictions for businesses, until the red or orange designation from the geographic area is modified. Programs contained within the yellow designated areas may continue to operate but weekly testing is highly encouraged. In cases where an individual resides in a certified residential program and attends certified day services, the residential provider should be responsible for referring the individual for testing in order to avoid duplicative testing.

The scope of enhanced testing and program suspensions/reduction is summarized in the following tables:

Type of Activity	RED	ORANGE	YELLOW
<u>Certified Site-Based Day Services</u> (day habilitation, site-based prevocational services, site-based respite, pathway to employment)	SUSPENDED	SUSPENDED	OPEN  -In compliance with OPWDD’s Interim Guidance for Day Services Reopening and the Day Program Reopening Safety Plans  -Weekly Testing Recommended
<u>Group Non-Site-Based Services</u> (day habilitation without walls, community based prevocational services, non-site-based respite, community habilitation-group, supported employment-group)	SUSPENDED	OPEN  -10 Person capacity (inclusive of individuals and staff)  -Weekly Testing Recommended	OPEN  -In compliance with OPWDD’s Interim Guidance for Day Services Reopening and the Day Program Reopening Safety Plans  -Weekly Testing Recommended

<p><b><u>Non-Group Non-Site-Based Services</u></b>          (services provided to 1-3 individuals: community habilitation, respite, employment training, SEMP, community based prevocational services)</p>	<p>OPEN</p> <p>-2 Person capacity (inclusive of individuals and staff)</p> <p>-Weekly Testing Recommended</p>	<p>OPEN</p> <p>-4 Person capacity (inclusive of individuals and staff)</p> <p>-Weekly Testing Recommended</p>	<p>OPEN</p> <p>Weekly Testing Recommended</p>
<p><b><u>Residential</u></b>          (certified residences, free standing respite, day services and community habilitation being temporarily delivered in a certified residence)</p>	<p>OPEN</p> <p>-visitation suspended</p> <p>-Weekly Testing Recommended</p>	<p>OPEN</p> <p>-visitation based on COVID status of home</p> <p>-Weekly Testing Recommended</p>	<p>OPEN</p> <p>Weekly Testing Recommended</p>

**4. Visitation Suspension**

Visitation to OPWDD certified residential facilities within the designated geographic clusters will be suspended in accordance with the DOH health advisory, [All Residential Congregate Facilities](#), issued on October 23, 2020.