

## **Plan for the Continuation of Communitas Family Support, AFC & Recreation services during Covid - 19 and the State's Four-Phase plan for reopening**

May 26, 2020

Dear Communitas families and stakeholders:

We hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well.

In conjunction with the State's plan for phased reopening, which was announced on May 18<sup>th</sup>, we would like to provide you with an update on what is happening in the Communitas Family Support Division and our plan to move forward as the state reopens. We acknowledge that this is an incredibly difficult time for all families, especially those with family members with developmental disabilities and want you to know that although we are working remotely, we continue to be available to provide support and answer questions.

We are optimistic the information below on all Family Support programs will be helpful as we enter the reopening phase:

- **DDS funded Family Support:** All DDS funded Family Support programs continue to run, though we have suspended home visiting at this time. Although Family Support coordinators are working remotely, we will have a Family Support coordinator in the Family Resource Center Monday – Friday beginning June 1. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your Family Support Coordinator with questions at any time or call Judy SantaMaria at 781-587-2314. We strive to do our best to support all families during this difficult period.  
The Center staff have just completed a survey with families asking what you need from us in terms of information at this time. *Weekly Informational Conversations* via ZOOM will begin the first week of June and run through July. Based upon your feedback, topics will include emergency planning, behavioral suggestions and the CARES Act. We will send out an announcement via *Constant Contact* as soon as our schedule is complete.
- **Recreation:** Recreation began to offer virtual programming 3 weeks ago. The programs offered include: Monday Movie Night, Nature Adventures with our Recreation Director, Jess Viens, Tall Tales with Recreation Program Specialist, Lawrence Richards, Tik Tok Dance Class, Virtual Fitness Classes with our Asst. Recreation Director, Taylor Murphy, and Breakfast with the Rec Crew. Please look for a *Constant Contact* announcing virtual dances and karaoke. Although we all cannot wait to get out and about, we will follow the State's four-phase approach to offering group-based recreation programming. To register for programs please visit the recreation website at <https://communitas.recdesk.com/Community/Page?pageId=671>. Please contact Jess Viens at 781-587-2380 or [jviens@communitasma.org](mailto:jviens@communitasma.org) for more information.
- **Adult Family Care:** The Adult Family Care Program has been working with caregivers using telehealth since 3/16/20. AFC Nurses and Case Managers check in with families regularly and complete monthly visits via telephone or video conferencing. AFC staff are working remotely and are best reached via their Communitas email addresses, or you may contact Katie Skeirik at [kskeirik@communitasma.org](mailto:kskeirik@communitasma.org) with any questions.

- DCF funded Successful Parenting Program: Our DCF program continues to run with a reduced capacity. We continue to support families through remote methods. We are in communication with DCF and other providers to develop and follow best practices in supporting families with parents that have intellectual disabilities through the Covid-19 pandemic.

We plan to send updates to all families and stakeholders as we move through the four-phase reopening. Look for the schedule on *Informational Conversations* and increased recreation programs which will be sent out via *Constant Contact*.

Stay safe,

Judy SantaMaria and Communitas Family Support, Adult Family/Foster Care and Recreation staff