



## **5/13/2020 – COVID-19 Update from [Amy C. Sousa, Chief Executive Officer](#)**

Dear Guild Families,

It has been 50 long days since The Guild announced that all group homes would be closed to visitors, including family members and guardians, to slow the spread of COVID-19. I wish that I could tell you that those restrictions have been lifted; unfortunately, The Guild continues to receive medical information as well as direction from the state that indicate such visitations are not safe yet.

Like most governments and organizations, The Guild has convened a task force to create plans for *how* The Guild will move toward lifting restrictions (with particular emphasis on family visitation) while containing the spread of COVID-19. However, the question of *when* those restrictions should fade will be determined by a combination of medical assessment, data analysis, and The Guild's government regulators' directions. Until those things come into full view, The Guild remains bound by public health guidance and our regulators' directions, which are as follows.

MA Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDS)

### **[Residential Program Guidance Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)**

Last updated on April 13, 2020

- All in-person visitation to group homes and residential facilities is now prohibited, except for certain compassionate care situations, such as an end-of-life situation. Program staff should help individuals stay in contact with their family, friends, and loved ones using technology, including phone and video calls.
- Residential providers should communicate restrictions on visitation to families and/or guardians, and should support attempts by families and guardians to visit remotely using technology, including phone and video calls.
- Individuals taken home by their family must remain with their family for the duration of this public health emergency.
- Residential programs should contact any entities that have staff regularly visiting their programs (e.g., contracted staffing agencies, attorneys, pharmacy delivery organizations, or cleaning agencies) to review and approve their protocols for preventing the spread of COVID-19.

The Guild's leaders will continue to participate actively in meetings with government officials and trade associations to provide information and insight

as to the toll that the COVID-19 virus and associated restrictions are taking on the individuals we serve and their families. We will keep you apprised immediately of any changes to those policies and protocols.

In the meantime, our staff will make every effort to use electronic communication methods to keep people connected during this time. I know that it's not the same. It's tiresome, frustrating, heartbreaking, and even infuriating. While I cannot change those feelings for you, I welcome you to continue to share your thoughts and concerns with me and the team. Every email you send and call that you make is a reminder of our obligation to your children and to you. We take that obligation seriously. We will continue to work to figure out what comes next and share information as it becomes available.

Take care,  
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