



TO: Recovery Residences and Residential Rehabilitation Programs (RRP) Programs

FROM: Aliya Jones, M.D., M.B.A. 
Deputy Secretary, Behavioral Health

DATE: March 17, 2020

RE: Guidance for Recovery Residences and Residential Rehabilitation Programs

The purpose of this communication is to provide guidance to Recovery Residences and Residential Rehabilitation Programs (RRP). This guidance is based on what is currently known [about the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This document also includes guidance from the National Sober Living Association. Information can be found at (<https://nationalsoberliving.org>). **Please continue to look at resources on CDC's website as information is updated daily as the circumstances change daily.**

Create a Household Plan of Action:

(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fcommunity%2Fget-your-household-ready-for-COVID-19.html)

- **Talk with the people who need to be included in your plan.** Meet with household members, other relatives, and friends to discuss [what to do if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in your community](#) and what the needs of each person will be.
- **Plan ways to care for those who might be at greater risk for serious complications.** There is limited information about [who may be at risk for severe complications from COVID-19 illness](#). From the data that are available for COVID-19 patients, and from data for related coronaviruses such as SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV, it is possible that older adults and persons who have underlying chronic medical conditions may be at risk for more serious complications. Early data suggest older people are more likely to have serious COVID-19 illness. If you or your household members are at increased risk for COVID-19 complications, please consult with your health care provider for more information about [monitoring your health for symptoms suggestive of COVID-19](#). CDC will recommend actions to help keep people at high risk for complications healthy if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in your community.

- **Get to know your neighbors.** Talk with your neighbors about emergency planning. If your neighborhood has a website or social media page, consider joining it to maintain access to neighbors, information, and resources.
- **Identify aid organizations in your community.** Create a list of local organizations that you and your household can contact in the event you need access to information, health care services, support, and resources. Consider including organizations that provide mental health or counseling services, food, and other supplies.
- **Create an emergency contact list.** Ensure your household/residence has a current list of emergency contacts for family, friends, neighbors, carpool drivers, health care providers, teachers, employers, the local public health department, and other community resources.

Practice Good Personal Health Habits and Plan for Home-based Actions:

- **Practice everyday preventive actions now.** Remind everyone in your household of the importance of practicing everyday preventive actions that can help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses:
 - Avoid close contact with people who are sick
 - Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care
 - Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue
 - Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles) using a regular household detergent and water
 - If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent and water prior to disinfection. For disinfection, a list of products with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved emerging viral pathogens claims, maintained by the American Chemistry Council Center for Biocide Chemistries (CBC), is available at [Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Fighting Products](#)
 - Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.** If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Always wash your hands with soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.
- **Choose a room in your home that can be used to separate sick household members from those who are healthy.** Identify a separate bathroom for the sick person to use, if possible. Plan to clean these rooms, as needed, when someone is sick. [Learn how to care for someone with COVID-19 at home.](#)

Steps for People with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 Who Do Not Need to be Hospitalized

- Consult with the health care provider and public health staff (local health departments) to evaluate whether the person can be cared for at home/residence.
- Call ahead before visiting a health care provider.

- If determined the individual has been exposed, the individual should wear facemask when around people sharing a room and before you enter a health care provider's office.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and then discard tissue.
- Avoid sharing personal household items and bathrooms.
- Clean all "high touch" surfaces everyday.
- Individuals with confirmed COVID 19 should remain under home isolation precautions and separated from others.
- Prohibit visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home.
- Throw out disposable face masks and gloves after using. Do not reuse.

The following guidance has been issued by the National Sober Living Association:
<https://nationalsoberliving.org>

- Sober living operators provide hand sanitizer in every room
- Assign three or four people to regularly wipe down countertops railings, chairs, etc.
- Get a forehead thermometer and check people regularly
- If residents get ill with any type of respiratory illness, cough or fever, ensure they are immediately seeking medical advice.

Storage of Medication

Certified and Non-Certified Recovery Residences should review the National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR) policy and procedures that address residents' prescription and non-prescription medication usage and storage (see NARR standard F, Promote a Safe and Healthy Environment 16 , d) and review the plan for emergencies to include verifying and posting emergency numbers and updating residents emergency contact information (standard 19 Plan for Emergencies a), b).and c). Providers should follow all DEA requirements for storage of Controlled Dangerous Substances (CDS).

BHA will provide COVID-19 updates as they become available. For more information, including FAQs, visit the BHA website or coronavirus.maryland.gov. For additional questions or concerns, contact your Local Behavioral Health Authority.

Additional Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/get-your-household-ready-for-COVID-19.html>

Households with Suspected/Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/get-your-household-ready-for-COVID-19.html>

Household Checklist:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/checklist-household-ready.html>

The recommendations include General Recommendations for Cleaning and Disinfection in Housing with People Isolated in Home Care: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>

National Association of Recovery Residences:

[https://narronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NARR Standard V.3.0 release 11-2018.pdf](https://narronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NARR_Standard_V.3.0_release_11-2018.pdf)

National Sober Living Association:

<https://nationalsoberliving.org>

Maryland Department of Health:

<https://coronavirus.maryland.gov>

Maryland Department of Health's Recommendations for Infection Control and COVID-19 Prevention in Facilities Serving Older Adults:

<https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/Documents/Recommendations%20for%20COVID-19%20Infection%20Control%20and%20Prevention%20-%20March%2010%202020.pdf>

