



*"Committed to Care"*

**To:** All Staff; Families

**From:** Program Directors

**Re:** Visitation Protocols

**Date:** 11/4/2020

This letter is being sent to families to keep everyone informed of changes to LCARC's procedures for family visits that occur in and out of the group homes.

- **Any family member who takes an individual out of the group home must fill out LCARC's Visit Attestation (ARC 20/564) upon arrival at the group home.** This form has been updated with an additional question regarding any visits that the family member has made to any of the states on Pennsylvania's travel advisory list. This list is available on the PA Department of Health's website and is updated regularly.
  - LCARC asks that anyone who has returned from an out-of-state trip within the last 14 days call the office and speak to a caseworker or director **prior to** picking up or visiting your loved one at the group home. This will assist us in addressing and mitigating any risks for the individuals in advance.
  - **Before returning the individual to the group home, the family member MUST call the group home and allow staff to ask the questions on the *back* of the Visit Attestation (ARC 20/564).**
- **Any family member who is just visiting an individual at the group home MUST fill out the LCARC Visitor Record (ARC 20/562).** These remain "porch visits" only, to prevent the risk of visitors spreading illness to the other members of the household.
- Employees, contracted workers, or other staff who will be in the house for any length of time must fill out the Visitor & Shift-to-Shift Employee Log (ARC 20/555).

The Office of Developmental Programs, in concert with Pennsylvania Department of Health, has been monitoring and updating the positivity rate in the county on a weekly basis. Since our county has been steadily rising over the last few weeks, we are communicating how we will be using this information.

- If the positivity rate exceeds 10% in the county, all visitation in the group homes, outings in the community, **and attendance at day programs** will be suspended until the positivity rate is below 10% for two consecutive weeks.

- If the positivity rate ranges from 5% to 10%, LCARC will permit individuals to visit families and loved ones outside of the Residential Group Home, provided that the required paperwork is completed and visits will not create an increased risk for exposure to COVID-19. An increased risk might include:
  - Visits to an area where there is a greater than 10% positivity rate level of community transmission.
  - Attendance at a gathering with people who do not live in the household *and* failure to wear masks for the duration of the visit.
  - Lack of physical distancing from the individual (hugging/riding in a vehicle with unmasked persons, etc.).
  - Visits that include participation in a large gathering or celebration.

Visits that meet the criteria for increased risk put everyone in our program at risk. Please contact your program specialist before you plan such a visit. Individuals who are potentially exposed to COVID-19 during a visit will be required to quarantine for at least 14 days. If symptoms occur during quarantine, the primary care physician will be contacted for further direction.

For individuals who work in a community setting (outside Lark workshop), we will continue to work with their employers to see what options are available and try to come to the safest solution. We would work with them and assure their job duties are incorporating safe practices such as social distancing, wearing a mask, and washing hands often.

If you have any questions regarding the need for these practices or have general questions regarding Covid-19, please do not hesitate to contact our office or the caseworker for the home of your loved one so that we can be of assistance.