



March 13, 2020

Good afternoon:

Over the past weeks Benedictine leadership has monitored the evolving concerns around COVID-19 in Maryland on a daily basis. We have met regularly and instituted best practice agency wide and in our day and residential services for hygiene and infection control as a safeguard for the health and wellness of the people we support and our staff. We have also taken initial steps to prepare for the possibility that the virus has a more direct impact on the Eastern Shore.

Yesterday, following the Governors Press Conference, we received additional guidance from The Developmental Disabilities Administration. In reviewing that document, we are reassured that we have already instituted many of the recommendations as listed below:

1. Updated our emergency planning procedures.
2. Established communication with key health care and emergency officials locally.
3. Communication with staff regarding signs and symptoms, specific expectations around personal hygiene and environmental cleanliness, and reinforcing the need to stay home if sick and seek medical care.
4. Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols on campus and in the homes.
5. Stocking and maintaining inventory on Personal Protective Equipment.
6. Nurses have worked with our pharmacy to get increased medication and personal supplies.
7. Sought the guidance of medical professionals regarding non-critical medical care.

Based on the guidance document, we are also instituting the following precautions:

1. Residential weekend plans involving public places where numbers of people gather (dining out, movies) will be switched to home based activities.
2. Benedictine will suspend using our contract public transportation provider on weekdays and utilize our own staff and vehicles to bring people to day services.
3. Suspend community based volunteer and personal enrichment activities in favor of site based services.
4. Evaluate community employment and risk with each person, their family, and the advice of health care professionals. Make every effort with work with employers to maintain jobs for the future.
5. Continue day services in Ridgely and Easton unless otherwise recommended.
6. Instituted Visitor restrictions at day services and in homes.
  - a. No non family visitors in day services or group homes.
  - b. Family visits should be scheduled in advance with Program Coordinator (day services or group homes)
  - c. Encourage remote communication as an alternative to in person visits.

Benedictine will continue to monitor the situation with COVID-19 in conjunction with state agencies and local health officials. We will provide updates daily through email beginning Monday, March 16, 2020. All correspondence can also be found on the main page of our website [www.benschool.org](http://www.benschool.org).

We appreciate continued conversations as we navigate these unique circumstances. Thank you for your support and cooperation.



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