

LEXINGTON HAPPENINGS



SPECIAL BULLETIN: COVID-19 UPDATES

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2020

MESSAGE FROM SHALONI



Dear Lexington Staff Member,

I hope you are well, as are your families. We have gone back to our COVID-19 Bulletin theme for Lexington Happenings this week because COVID-19 has recently come into Lexington in a big way and we are currently in a serious situation:

- On November 2, a gentleman we support at O'Neil, a small home in Johnstown, tested positive because he may have been exposed during a family visit. There are five men who live there, four of whom have tested positive along with five staff members. They are all recovering. My sincere gratitude to the team at O'Neil and everyone who has supported this team to get through this very challenging time.
- During the last week, one day program and six additional homes in Fulton County have been exposed and placed on quarantine, including homes where the people we support are our most medically frail. The following programs are currently under a precautionary quarantine due to exposure: Bacon Brook IRA, 29A IRA, Mountainview I & II IRA, Lake Avenue IRA and Seasons day program. All of these exposures have been related to positive staff members.
- There are a couple other homes that we have placed on precautionary quarantine due to symptoms of illness. We are in the process of ascertaining whether this is related to COVID-19 or another type of illness.
- Since the first exposure on November 2, we have done 336 tests. Outside of O'Neil, one person we support and 6 staff members have tested positive. However, please remember that as these are very recent exposures, we are still awaiting results of 111 tests. Everyone who has tested positive or has been exposed is being monitored closely by our medical staff. They are either asymptomatic or showing less severe symptoms. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers.
- There has been a significant increase in Fulton County, with 51 new cases diagnosed during the last week, bringing the total number of cases to 454 as of 11/23/20. 22 positive cases were diagnosed on 11/23/20 alone. Our surrounding

MANAGERS:

Please post/share this information with your staff.

Does your program have an event/information you'd like listed here?

Please send all information to Megan Balser (balserm@thearclexington.org)

at least two weeks in advance of the event. For community events in Fulton or Albany Counties, please visit the links below.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

FULTON COUNTY:
fultonmontgomeryny.org
44lakes.com

ALBANY COUNTY:
albany.com/events/
events.timesunion.com

counties are also seeing significant increases. We have seen an increase of 65 cases in Montgomery County and 74 additional cases in Herkimer County during the last week alone.

- All of the Lexington exposures currently are in Fulton County; thankfully, there are no active cases in Schoharie or Albany counties. The number of positive cases in the Schoharie community remains very low, but as you may know, the Albany area is seeing record increases. These haven't affected our homes in Albany yet as we only have a small number of staff there as compared to Fulton County. We are a small, rural community in Fulton County with Lexington as its largest employer. Everyone in Fulton County is connected in some way to Lexington; thus the county is very vulnerable for Lexington because increased cases in the community most definitely affects our employees and those we support.

This is a critical and serious point at Lexington. During the first wave of COVID-19 at Lexington, our homes in Fulton County that support our most medically frail were not exposed. Today, our most vulnerable have been exposed and the number of people exposed is growing rapidly. Our leadership team has been working diligently to manage the exposed programs and assess what additional steps we need to take. In the meantime, we need your help to ensure that we are adhering to the basics that we know are effective in keeping the virus at bay.

We want to make sure to completely minimize the chance that anyone else at Lexington gets sick – people we support or staff members. Wherever you work at Lexington, we are asking you to re-focus on these basic measures to keep everyone safe:

- **MASKS** – The proper use of masks is our single best line of defense against COVID-19. We are asking you to wear Lexington-issued surgical masks at all times when you are at work and on duty – in every program and every department. Masks must be worn under the chin and over the nose and must be fitted properly by bending the metal piece snugly to your nose. The only time you may not wear your mask is if you are alone – when eating alone, in the bathroom, in a private office by yourself with the door closed or outside alone.
- **SCREENINGS** - We want to catch anyone who has been exposed before they bring COVID to Lexington. Screening procedures have become very, very important in our efforts here. We will be going back to the following:
 - Residential buildings will have exterior doors locked with signage indicating No Visitors. Main buildings will be locked except for main entrances.
 - Screening questions and temperatures will be taken by designated people in each building/residence instead of people signing in themselves and taking their own temperatures.
 - You will be asked to complete screening questions and temperatures at each location that you visit.
 - If you show any new signs of illness, we need to know immediately. Kathy Kane, our Director of Medical Services, has experienced people who are working with symptoms. Between the flu and COVID, anything but a toothache can be considered a symptom. When you come to work with symptoms, you are risking the safety of yourself, your co-workers and people we support. Please pay extra attention to yourself and symptoms you may be experiencing.
 - If you call out sick, you will be asked screening questions by your supervisor and will be asked to check in with telehealth (UCM or MVP) or your physician. We don't want this to become cumbersome for you; however, the best way we can keep our Lexington family and you safe to ensure that we are stopping any potential exposure from happening at all.
- **SOCIAL DISTANCE** – We must keep at least a 6-foot distance from one another and the people we support unless we are directly providing person care, even if you are in the same household unit. *If what you're doing is less than 6 feet, we are asking that you make it 10 minutes of exposure at maximum.* The only exception is when you are providing personal care to people we support that takes more than 10 minutes.
- **REDUCING FOOTPRINTS** – What we mean is that we want to reduce the number of people who go to any site. If people are going to multiple sites, try to stay outside as much as possible. We are also limiting going to stores for supplies, etc. Your supervisors can assist with any specific needs.

- **FAMILY VISITS** – We have placed on hold all family visits except those that will occur in very controlled environments ensuring the practices that have been outlined above. The only exceptions to this are related to the Thanksgiving holiday and very unique circumstances. These will be approved on a case-by-case basis after thorough review by a medical team.
- **OUTSIDE OF LEXINGTON** – I am requesting you to please intentionally assess everything you do outside of Lexington in light of the increased cases in Fulton and surrounding counties. The second wave is here and the curve is higher than what we saw in the first wave due to increased opportunities for exposure in the community. As difficult and unnatural as it is, we need to keep that exposure away from you and our Lexington family. Just one exposure results in so many people having to endure the pain and discomfort of repeated testing, isolation and risk to their basic health and safety. Please think about what you do at Lexington and assess your activities outside of Lexington to ensure that you are reducing exposure to yourself and people you are close to.

When I reflect at this time of year on the things I am most grateful for, it always comes back to you, our employees. Dan and I send each of you our most sincere gratitude and thanks for everything you have done, and will continue to do, to keep everyone safe at Lexington. There is no limit as to what we can do together as a Lexington family. Thank you for giving your best every day. We wish you and yours a Happy Thanksgiving.

With my utmost gratitude,

Shaloni

UPDATES LIKE THESE ARE POSTED ON LEXINGTON'S WORKPLACE COMMUNITY!

If you aren't on Workplace, please contact Courtney Mickels at mickelc@thearclexington.org for an invitation. Turn on notifications for new posts by clicking your profile icon at the bottom left, clicking "Settings," then "Notifications" and selecting how and when you receive notifications.

RESOURCES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Previous resources can be found at thearclexington.org/wellness or thearclexington.org/family-connections.

- **United Concierge Medicine: The Virtual ER**—Lexington's Telemedicine provider (1-844-484-7362).
- **MVP: My Visit Now**—Lexington's Schoharie Telemedicine provider. Click the link or visit <https://bit.ly/34D519b> to view a step-by-step flyer on how to use this program.
- **Information on COVID-19**—News, information and resources regarding COVID-19 from the state government.
- **COVID-19 Testing in New York**—Details on state-run COVID-19 testing and how to obtain a test.
- **New York COVID-19 Travel Advisory**—Up-to-date information on state guidelines for travel in and out of New York.
- **COVID-19: Holiday Celebrations and Small Gatherings**—Tips and information from the CDC on how to celebrate the holidays safely during the pandemic.
- **COVID-19: Celebrating Thanksgiving**—Thanksgiving-specific tips for celebrating the holiday while staying safe during the pandemic.
- **WHO COVID-19 Information**—Advice, guidance, FAQs, resources, news, research and more about COVID-19 from the World Health Organization.
- **200+ DIY Self-Care Products**—From the [Lexington Activity & Resource Center](#): Click the link for tutorials on how to make over 200 beauty and self-care products at home, for yourself or for special holiday gifts!

LEXINGTON HAPPENINGS DIGITAL ARCHIVE

If you are not viewing this newsletter online, please go to thearclexington.org/lexington-happenings to see the digital version, which includes active links to all the resources and documents highlighted in this week's issue! The archive of previous editions is also available at that page. If you have any questions or would like to submit information for a future newsletter, please contact Megan Balser at balserm@thearclexington.org or (518) 661-9932.

#RISINGTOGETHER AT LEXINGTON!



November is almost over, and Lexington is as busy as ever! Here are a few stories from across the agency:

- Thanks so much to all the staff who made it possible for the people we support to vote in the election this month! Voting is a crucial right, and making one's voice heard is an important aspect of self-advocacy. Being able to vote rightfully means a lot to the people we support! Pictured is Lewis McDonough of Feura Bush showing off his "I Voted" sticker.
- November is National Adoption Month, and Eagle Mills had the opportunity this month to help one young woman celebrate the day her life changed forever! On November 12, 2001, Eva Butler met her father at JFK International Airport and they started their journey as a family together! Her Eagle Mills family helped her celebrate her "Gotcha Day" with cake, sushi and more!
- Bridget Kennison recently took the huge step of moving out of her family's home and into an apartment of her own in Cobleskill! She has spent the past few weeks working hard to establish new routines for cooking and cleaning, shopping, laundry and following a daily schedule independently. She has learned to join Zoom classes completely on her own, and even received a grant to help furnish her new place! She has enjoyed adorning her apartment with photos of her new niece and is really looking forward to decorating it for the holidays! Thanks to everyone who helped Bridget transition into this new phase in her life, especially Sue, who has been helping Bridget with nutrition, meal preparation and exploring her new community.
- Bill Cline recently moved from Robert Street in Schoharie County to Cutter Lane in Fulton County! Though he was anxious about his new home at first, he was also very happy about the change and is off to a great start settling in. He loves his new room and is adjusting well to the new house and housemates. Welcome to Cutter Lane, Bill!
- Baking is a fun and delicious way to pass the time as the weather gets chillier! At Bridge Street, Matt Bailey and Cynthia Dunham worked together to make homemade pumpkin brownies to share. Thanks to all the staff who help people make delicious and healthy snacks that everyone will love!
- Holiday-themed classes are in full swing at the Nigra Arts Center! 231 South Kingsboro recently visited the center for a class on making rustic Christmas trees with instructor Melanie Fay. They came out beautiful! Pictured is Brittany Snell with her tree.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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