



COVID-19 UPDATE FOR LEXINGTON LEADERS - 5/13/20

How are people affected doing?

These are the updates from Friday's Lexington Happenings:

- It continues to be positive at Lexington. As of this writing, we do not have any homes on isolation.
- We do not have anyone we support at Lexington with a current positive diagnosis. Karen from Pinewood is positive, however, she is currently at a rehab center, having moved there after a hospitalization. Please keep her full recovery in your thoughts and prayers.
- No one we support is on a precautionary quarantine nor are any test results pending.
- Seven of our employees are on a precautionary quarantine due to illness; Three are on a mandated quarantine by the public health department due to family members being positive from the Fulton Center; and the one staff member from McQueen who was positive remains in quarantine.

What does this indicate?

Seeing where we are today at Lexington versus where we were just a few weeks ago may indicate that we are over the hump. Unfortunately, I don't think that is the case. Positive cases continue to rise in our areas with an increase of 131 since Friday in Albany county, bringing the total cases to 1479, and an increase of 34 in Fulton county, bringing the total cases to 135.

My personal opinion is that the reason we are doing well at Lexington is because each of you has strengthened the preventative measures among your programs and staff members. Screening of employees and visitors, use of masks and gloves for employees, use of face coverings for people we support and true social distancing in our programs and buildings is helping us stay safe and healthy.

Please continue to focus on this, as well as take the time to help staff follow these practices at home and in the community. If they and our community stays safe, the likelihood of bringing the virus into Lexington lessens. It is especially important to remind staff of this now as businesses start to re-open.

Governor's NY Forward - What does this mean and how does it affect us?

With the NY PAUSE order hopefully ending on May 15, New York Forward will be the new reality as the state begins to reopen. Reopening will begin regionally, and will only be possible once a region scores 7/7 on specific metrics. Even though cases are increasing in Fulton county, reopening is based on the metrics of the entire region. Mohawk Valley Region, of which Fulton county is a part of, has met the requirements as a region, and may begin to reopen after May 15.

To prepare for reopening, each business must have a plan that covers three basic elements:

- protecting employees and consumers by considering adjustments to hours or shifts to reduce density, maintaining social distancing protocols, and restricting non-essential travel for employees
- improving safety of the physical workspace by requiring masks if employees are in frequent close contact with others and implementing strict cleaning and sanitation standards
- implementing processes that lower the risk of infection by conducting employee health screening and reporting confirmed cases to customers

Although Lexington is and has always been an essential business that continued to be OPEN, there are certain programs, practices and procedures we closed or changed. Closure of site-based day and employment supports, restrictions on family visits and other visitors, restrictions on community activities, meetings and travel, are some examples of these. As of this writing, OPWDD's directives that has required many of these closures and restrictions remain in effect. Once OPWDD relaxes these directives, we will assess what is safe to do at Lexington.

Given the continued risk that the coronavirus poses and the fiscal crisis that NYS is in that might affect us, we do not believe that we will simply go back to what it was before the pandemic affected us. Instead we will need to re-engineer and re-invent new program and service models that will ensure health, safety and happiness of the people we support in a safe and an even more cost efficient way. During the pandemic we have seen tremendous increase in your support of each other and a willingness to do whatever it takes to support people among departments and staff that has led to amazing results in the areas of creative and collaborative staffing models in residential, unique ways to provide day, employment and family supports, and use of technology to increase accessibility to supports. Overall, we have seen a decrease in injuries to people we support and staff, decrease in illness and negative incidents, increase in emotional health among people we support, more streamlined mail delivery, ordering of food and supplies, deliveries, and other procedures, reduced staff call outs and overtime, and enhanced communication and show of appreciation amongst everyone. The senior leadership team met yesterday and began plans that will capitalize on these positive outcomes to re-engineer and re-invent our models of delivery of service and supports.

We would like you to be involved in helping to develop these plans. Below are Zoom links for you to register for a **full management meeting** where we will discuss these initiatives further so that you can learn more, offer feedback and participate in workgroups. The meetings will be held on Tuesday, May 19th, at 10 am and 1:30 pm. Please register for one session only.

Session 1 at 10 am - [Click here to register](#)

Session 2 at 1:30 pm - [Click here to register](#)

OPWDD Visits

OPWDD will be initiating surveys of our residential settings related to COVID-19. Most will be done by phone. Homes that support more medically frail individuals will receive in-person visits with 72 hour notice. Visits will be one hour or less in duration and focus on direct support staff's use of preventive measures, infection control procedures, health status monitoring and use of

PPE as staff interact with each other and the individuals they support. We will keep you apprised as we learn more but if a home receives a call, please ensure that it is directed to Josephine Bailey.

Thank you to all Lexington staff members

As a gesture of appreciation, we will be sending out another gift certificate for dinner for 4 takeout at local restaurants shortly. Based on your input, we have added the co-op and some grocery options for staff that do not wish to have a takeout dinner.



Connecting with the Families of People We Support

This has been a particularly difficult time for families of people we support, many of whom are elderly. We have each other to lean on as we are experiencing this together. Many of the families may be isolated due to their own health risks and may have no one to connect with as they navigate through their fears about themselves and their loved one at Lexington. As can be seen from the above picture of the Johnsons, I know that our staff are truly doing an incredible job supporting the connections with family members. I have had more family members call me to say positive things during this time than in my entire 10 years as Executive Director. As we embark into conversations regarding re-opening, I would like each family member to have contact with a management team member during the next two weeks. Just check in on them, listen to them, answer questions and share something about their loved one that will make them smile and feel reassured. If they ask about reopening day programs and other supports, simply convey that there has been no change in the directives to close from OPWDD. Share that we are developing plans on how we can support people in a safe way once re-opening is allowed and will keep them informed. Always end the conversation by reassuring them that their loved one is safe, happy and healthy if they live in our homes, and if they live in the community, ask if there is anything you can do to help during this difficult time. Your communications with them are critical to them feeling confidence and hope.

The picture at the top is a letter to staff written by Shannon. THANK YOU for helping Shannon and all those we support, and our staff, feel confidence and strength. THANK YOU for keeping the Lexington family strong.

With gratitude and tremendous respect for what you do,

Shaloni & Dan

[For all Lexington Leaders' COVID-19 Updates, please click here](#) | -