



UPDATE FOR LEXINGTON LEADERS - 7/23/20

COVID-19 at Lexington:

- There has been no change since the last update.

COVID-19 in our communities:

- As of July 23, there were a total of 268 positive cases of coronavirus in Fulton County and 2,401 in Albany County. Since July 16, Albany cases rose by 111 and Fulton County by 2. The number of new cases in Albany over a 7-day period rose significantly this week - there are 36 positive cases so far that has been traced back to a July 4 party on Hudson Street in Albany with college students in attendance. The Albany County Executive is encouraging these young people to get tested to help stop the spread. Fulton County dropped during the same period. There has been an increase in Montgomery county due to social gatherings as well.
- We are including a [resource in Lexington Happenings regarding social gatherings](#). Please encourage your staff to read it.

New Guidelines for Family Visits

In order to make family visits more comfortable we are offering space within our day programs so that families can use these locations to visit their loved one. This will allow for bathroom use and a controlled environment to avoid weather conditions such as high temperatures or rain. Many of these programs have comforts such as kitchens, bathrooms, couches, games and TV's available. We can also offer options for pavilion use in some locations. When arranging visits with families, please ask if they would like one arranged at a day program. if they would, then please connect with your day program manager to arrange on. We will still welcome visits at our homes, in outside areas, or window visits.

With consultation with Dr. Cope, our medical director, we are agreeing to address family requests by saying the following to them:

We ask that you follow all the precautionary guidelines during these visits. These include wearing face coverings or masks during the visit, maintaining social distance of at least 6 feet, and sanitization of hands by visitors and people we support. We understand that it is customary for families to greet each other with a hug or kiss. We ask that you keep this brief and most importantly, please keep your mask on during this. Families have asked if they could bring a snack to share with their loved one. As you know, meals are challenging for many of the people we support. It might require that your family member may require close support and supervision to be able to eat or drink

anything during which masks or social distancing cannot be maintained. If your family member is able to stay seated 6 feet away from you and is able to eat or drink independently, you may bring a light snack or drink to share.

As always, visits must be preplanned and arranged with the Residence Manager. If a family asks for longer than 2 hours and you are able to accommodate it without infringing upon someone else, please do so.

Home Visits

New guidelines and corresponding “Attestation” have been developed and put in place by Lexington, based on OPWDD guidelines, in an effort to partner with families so that loved ones can again enjoy visits at the family home. The specifics within each are designed to help ensure that everyone directly and indirectly involved in these visits remains safe and healthy in light of the unique challenges associated with COVID-19. We are asking all Residence Managers to go over all expectations in detail with family.

Here are some of the highlights for you to consider:

- All visits have to be pre-scheduled with the Residence Manager, or Assistant Manager in his/her absence.
- Families will need to provide their own transportation for the visit.
- Visits for less than 48 hours will require the person to have standard screening procedures, including temperature checks, upon return.
- Visits that exceed 48 hours will require self-quarantine and COVID testing upon return. Testing will occur shortly after return and then again in 7 days.
- We would require that there be no more than one (1) off-site visit every 14 days. We are requiring families fill out a “COVID-19 Family Home Visit Attestation” that goes over preventative measures. It also asks families to document travel, if any, taken outside the family home and names of people with whom your family member came in close contact.
- The Residence Manager will talk about how the visit went and collect this upon return to Lexington.

Guidelines and Forms for Family Visits and Home Visits

[COVID-19 Visit Guidelines for Family Home Visits 7/23/20](#)

[COVID-19 Family Home Visit Attestation](#)

[COVID-19 Family Visit Log](#)

[COVID-19 Family Home Visit Log](#)

[COVID-19 On-Site Family Visit Guidelines](#)

Community Activities Guidance

OPWDD has also recently announced that agencies can assess their ability to safely support activities in the community. Again, with input from a variety of sources we have developed the attached guidelines and procedures in an effort to provide clear guidance so certain types of community based activities can occur. It is important to note that these parameters are certainly subject to change depending on the COVID-19 infection rate in our regions. As you and your teams have been doing right along since March, please continue to work with the people you support to help them understand how to access their communities safely in light of the inherent risks related to COVID-19. You will note that we have identified 3 Stages of permissible community based activities, with increasing risk/exposure levels as the stages progress. **At this time all programs supported by Lexington are considered to be in Stage 2. The only exception to this will be people from Mt. View 1 and Mt. View 2. This group of men and women are clearly more susceptible to very significant medical consequences should they be exposed to COVID-19.** As you help your staff and the people you support understand these guidelines please continue to help them understand how important it is for everyone to stay consistent with the simple behaviors we can all display to help us remain healthy: mask use, social distancing, frequent hand washing/sanitizing, and avoid crowded areas. Should you have any questions related to these expectations please contact your supervisor for support and guidance.

[COVID-19 Community Inclusion Guidelines 7/23/20](#)

Re-opening plans for Day Supports and Clinical/Medical Supports

OPWDD has provided some guidance regarding re-opening of these areas. Please [click here to read about our plans for re-opening of day/employment/clinical/medical supports](#).

August Town Hall Zoom Meetings for Families & Advocates

The next two Town Hall Zoom meetings have been scheduled for August 17 and August 18 for Families and Advocates. Please encourage your families to participate. People can now register themselves for the meetings, or they can contact Terry Williams, who will do the registration for them - williat@thearclexington.org. The dates are as follows:

Aug 17, 2020 06:00 PM Eastern Time

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZwvdOmrpz4vE9zqss6lPqZg59f4R2b1ikyP>

Aug 18, 2020 01:30 PM Eastern Time

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZcvf-GgpjlvEtU3oxhjZh6bJr_kArwgmPmm

After registering, they will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Follow this link to a recording of the Town Hall Zoom Meeting for Families and Advocates that took place on **Tuesday, July 21 at 1:30pm**. In it, there is a discussion and questions about the new guidance from OPWDD regarding home visits, community outings, day hab reopening and employment supports:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/68Erlrj7rGg3H9PA5ASDVvEsW9S1LPms0SdPqKBexR29BSYBNlqubrESYrEJnZ2NsBxmIpg7SqSNS3AZ>

A link to a July 24 newsletter for Families & Advocates will be sent to you via email when it is ready so you can field any questions from families if they should contact you. It will be emailed and sent via the post office early next week. **We would like you to verify with each family that you connect with that they have received the newsletter.**

Activities for Residences

We are developing recreation activities to be offered at our large day programs and the arts center that our homes can participate in as an intact household unit. In other words, only one house may participate at a time so there's no exposure to them or others. The area will be disinfected between homes. The goal is to have each home participate in something outside of their home once a week (we are still working on options in Albany). The Arts Center of offering this as of this weekend; here is the information:

The Paul Nigra Center for Creative Arts is offering programming for Lexington residences this Saturday, July 25. We have available TWO two-hour time slots that feature these activities in the lower-level Transitions area, and all equipment and supplies will be provided:

Bingo - Dance Studio
Pool Table and Games - Game Room
Meditation - Yoga Room
Campfire - Outside
Volleyball - Outside

You can watch this video to see all of the new COVID-19 protocols that the Arts Center has put in place to keep everyone safe: [Welcome Back to the Nigra Arts Center video](#)

We can have one house sign up for each time slot in order to accommodate proper social distancing, etc.:

9am-11am | 3:30-5:30pm (the 12:30-2:30pm is already reserved)

Rooms, public areas, etc. will be properly cleaned and disinfected between groups.

All ADs and RMs received an email about these opportunities that are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Call the Arts Center to register your group or if you have any questions at (518) 661-9932.

Thomas Maul Direct Support Professional Excellence Award for 2020

The Arc NY is looking for nominations for the **Thomas A. Maul Direct Support Professional Excellence Award for 2020**. The award, in the amount of \$2500, is presented annually to four DSPs. It recognizes individuals who consistently demonstrate excellence, creativity and commitment in providing supports to people with I/DD. In addition, this year there will be a cash award of \$250 for each person nominated.

Candidates will have displayed an exemplary level of performance over the course of his/her employment and will have shown commitment to improving the quality of life for people with I/DD. *We are looking for nominations for people who really stand out and up against the other chapters – DSPs who may have done something/are unique.* Here are some additional criteria; [application is attached](#) FYI:

- Nominee must have been on Chapter staff for at least five (5) years at the time of nomination
- Previously nominated individuals who have not been recognized may be resubmitted for consideration.

The application includes the following descriptors:

1. How does the nominee demonstrate dedication and self-motivation?
2. How does the nominee act as a role model for other staff?
3. How does the nominee seek education opportunities to increase knowledge and learn new skills?
4. How does the nominee show respect for the dignity, independence, culture, and rights of individuals with intellectual or other developmental disabilities and their families?

Each Chapter is allowed ONE nominee. Please submit to Terry Swierzowski the names of anyone you would like to nominate and reasons why **NO LATER THAN MONDAY, 7/27 AT NOON - swierzt@thearclexington.org** or call (518) 332-0846,

#RisingTogether

Zach Goes to his Family Home but wants to come back

Zach Lalonde from 65 Grand Street got to spend several weeks and his birthday at home with his family. His Mom was so thankful she sent photos of Zach and the celebration to the staff members at his house. Zach's mom joined our Zoom meeting a little early and shared with another parent how she felt a little disappointed when Zach saw his staff and immediately wanted to come back home (his home at Lexington). Judy Schelle has shared the same sentiment with me several times.

Elizabeth enjoys spending time with her mom but then, she wants to come back to her home. It is your leadership, guidance and personal support that builds "HOMES" for people we support. At Lexington, we help each person live their best life and that starts with a home that each person feels comfortable, secure and a sense of belonging in. Thank you for all you do for making that happen for everyone we support.

With gratitude and tremendous respect for what you do,

Shaloni & Dan

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