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## UPDATES FOR LEXINGTON LEADERS

**Please be sure to review the letter in Lexington Happenings.  
There is a nice Surprise in it!**

**March 11, 2021**

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LEADERSHIP IS NOT A  
POSITION OR A TITLE,  
IT IS ACTION AND  
EXAMPLE

A graphic with a dark background and white text. The text is arranged in four lines, centered. The background appears to be a blurred image of a person's hands.

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### COVID-19 AT LEXINGTON

Our community positivity numbers continue to trend downward, albeit slowly. As of March 11, the 7-day average positivity rates:

Albany 2.0 | Schoharie 1.3 | Fulton 3.2 This week, Fulton County dropped below a number of counties with higher numbers, mostly on Long Island, New York City and Westchester and Rockland Counties.

We are in a very good place in our agency as of today – there is no one we support in our homes or any employees currently positive...AND there are no homes on enhanced PPE or COVID precautions. Thank you for all you did to make this happen!

**Vaccinations:**

As you know, the vast majority of the people we support in our residential program are vaccinated and the people we support in our communities have started to be vaccinated in the last 3 weeks. These numbers are so promising as we look at being able to mindfully and slowly open programs and move forward with reopening other services. But we cannot *fully* open our programs and services until we reach #LexingtonImmunity – 70% of our staff have to receive the vaccine to get to this point. We are currently at 50.2% vaccination rate for all employees at Lexington. This is an increase from 48%....THANK YOU for what you did to make this happen!

If you or your staff have already received the COVID-19 vaccine, THANK YOU. If you or your staff want a vaccine, Lexington will assist you in getting it. If you or your staff are still on the fence, please contact a Lexington RN, your supervisor or director who will get you the information you need to help you make a good decision about getting a vaccine – for yourself, for your family, for the people we support, your co-workers...and for Lexington. The people we support are depending on you, as is Lexington. Without programs and services fully open, we cannot fully access all of the funding we need.

If you want a vaccine, please contact the following [#LexVaxChamps](#):

- Albany - Teresa Wands - (518) 332-5674
- Fulton - Kelly Green - (518) 736-4193
- Schoharie - Liz Weingarten - (518) 295-8810 ext 230
- or fill out the employee vaccine survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OYGTLFW>
- Information about the Vaccine is at [www.thearclexington.org/vaccine](http://www.thearclexington.org/vaccine)

Thank you for attending the 2/25 Management Meetings.  
**[Here is a link to the recording if you missed it.](#)**

Following is important information that was shared at these meetings.

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## **REVISED GUIDELINES FOR MANAGERS FOR EMPLOYEE-RELATED SITUATIONS DUE TO COVID-19**

Because of COVID-19 staff vaccinations and changes in CDC regulations, the Human Resources Department has revised the presentation/information about how to help managers handle employee-related situations when it comes to COVID-19. Below is a link to the revised PowerPoint presentation. Changes to these guidelines are as follows:

### **Employees With Symptoms**

ORIGINAL - we used to send employees to a doctor and keep them out pending test results or medical clearance.

REVISION - if the employee has been fully vaccinated, UCM or their doctor can order a test. We prefer to have Lexington do the test so we can use a rapid test to get faster results and potentially get employees back to work sooner. No quarantine necessary if the test is negative.

REVISION - if the employee is not vaccinated, UCM or their doctor can order a test. We prefer to have Lexington do the test so we can use a rapid test to get faster results and potentially get employees back to work sooner. No quarantine necessary if the test is negative.

REVISION - if the employee has had COVID within the past 3 months, UCM or their doctor can order a test. We prefer to have Lexington do the test so we can use a rapid test to get faster results and potentially get employees back to work sooner. No quarantine necessary if the test is negative.

THESE EMPLOYEES ARE NOW ELIGIBLE FOR COVID SICK PAY UNTIL THEY GET A NEGATIVE TEST RESULT OR ARE MEDICALLY CLEARED.

**Potential Exposure to Positive Person - Employee Fully Vaccinated**

ORIGINAL - we used to keep them out of work pending test result of contact

REVISION - as long as the employee is asymptomatic they can work with enhanced PPE

NO COVID SICK PAY

**Potential Exposure to Positive Person - Not Vaccinated**

ORIGINAL - we used to keep them out of work pending test result of contact

REVISION - as long as the employee is asymptomatic they can work with advanced PPE

NO COVID SICK PAY

**Travel**

ORIGINAL - if a family member had traveled or the employee had out of state travelers staying at home with them, we advised them to stay out and follow the NYS travel protocol for testing before returning to work

REVISION - as long as the employee is asymptomatic they can work with enhanced PPE

NO COVID SICK PAY

*If the employees traveled themselves, there is no change to the protocol.*

**Second or Third Positive COVID-19 Test**

Employees who personally test positive for COVID-19 a second or third time are eligible for COVID pay.

**MANAGERS COVID-19 SUPPORT LINE: (518) 774-2073**

Please be reminded to use the Managers COVID-19 Support Line which is open 7 days a week.

PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT KATHY KANE with employee information or questions about specific employee COVID-19 situations. The Support Line staff will collaborate with Kathy if needed.

Please remember to include ALL pertinent information in ONE communication when you call or email the hotline, including employee name, contact number, date he/she last worked and at what location. Email is [covid@thearclexington.org](mailto:covid@thearclexington.org)

Here is a link to the HR PowerPoint presentation, "[\*COVID-19 Protocols Revised 2/25/21\*](#)"

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Because of the great vaccination numbers as far as the people we support in our residential program, we are able to begin some reopenings of programs. We are exploring options for reopening with the guidance of our Medical Directors and knowing that we have to make decisions about how that can be done carefully, safely, and mindfully. We also know that it's important to re-open for people's mental health and well-being. We have been on COVID-19 restrictions for a year now and we are grateful that we are able to put the following reopening plans in place:

**DAY SUPPORTS REOPENING IN PHASES, STARTING ON MARCH 1  
People in the Community were first to return to program**

Day programming will begin in phases starting on March 1 with Phase I being offered to Community members both in Schoharie and Fulton with day hab, comm hab, and supplemental day services.

- We will be bringing community members back in cohorts - groups of 10 - and keep staff supporting the cohorts consistent so that exposure is minimized.
- Family members will have to transport to and from the program.
- There are initially 30-35 people participating in Fulton and 25 in Schoharie.

- Community members became eligible for COVID-19 vaccines on February 15 and we will use the reopening to encourage vaccinations with them. When we hit 70% of these community members being vaccinated, we will explore Lexington transportation options.

On Wednesday, March 15 we will begin day hab programming for people in our residential program.

We are currently working with Day Hab program managers to offer a new activity model for people to participate in, initially hoping to have homes participate in 1 activity/week such as yoga, painting, pet therapy, etc.

- A calendar of activities will be distributed and residential ADs will work with Managers to get all houses to participate.
- We will add to the activity calendar with the goal being that homes are participating in activities 4-5 hours per day with this new activity model.
- New staffing models will have staff start in residential, bring people from homes to day program, and then staff would return people to their homes.
- The goal will be to pilot and learn from our initial activity plans and what it will take to be successful with this model post-COVID.
- As well, this will give us a chance to support people getting back on a schedule and back into a routine.

In all instances, we will continue the COVID-19 health and safety precautions that we already have in place, including temperature checks and entry screening, social distancing in the program areas, and we will continue with our cleaning and disinfecting practices.

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## **REVISIONS TO FAMILY VISITS ON AND OFF LEXINGTON PROPERTIES**

We are happy to be able to provide some changes to a few of our COVID Guidance documents that will allow for more options for people we support. These changes are possible due to various factors such as strict adherence to our safety standards, progress related to responding to vaccination requests, some improvements with community rates and everyone's commitment to one another.

Changes are being made with how we're able to support people who have chosen to get vaccinated to spend time with their families.

- This group will now be able to spend up to one overnight visit with family every 2 weeks
- At homes that have an approved indoor space to host a visit, this group will be able to invite their family members to come for a visit
- Family members, significant others, long term best friends who are supported in different Lexington residences, and who chose to get vaccinated, may be able to visit one another – however, these situations must be reviewed and approved by an Associate Executive Director prior to occurring

Please refer to the following COVID Safety Guidelines with detailed information:

[COVID 19 Visit Guidelines – Family Home Visits Revised 2-17-21](#)

[COVID 19 Family Home Visit Attestation 2-17-21](#)

[COVID 19 Family Home Visit Log 2-17-21](#)

[COVID 19 On-Site Family Visit Guidelines 2-17-21](#)

[COVID 19 Family Visit Log 2-17-21](#)

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## **COMMUNITY INCLUSION CHANGES**

We are also able to offer more options for people to enjoy outside of their homes. This is also possible due to several factors such as the high percentage of people we support who chose to get vaccinated, the efforts by employees to keep everyone safe, and some improvements in local community rates.

Several new activity options are being offered at Lexington's main sites, called "**Experience Events**" and they begin this weekend. Individuals are able to participate as part of their "family unit". These Experience Events include Movie Matinees and Sporting Events, complete with concession stand snacks for sale, and a St. Patrick's Day Dinner on Tuesday, 3/16. Flyers for all of these events are included below.

- Individuals who have chosen to get vaccinated will be able to access a little more of their community given the added layer of protection they've chosen to get via the vaccine.
- We remain in Stage 2 of our guidelines, but these options have been slightly modified to reflect the changes in current risk factors.

Please refer to the following COVID Guidance documents for further details:

[COVID 19 Community Inclusion Guidelines 2-17-21](#)

[COVID 19 Community Inclusion Log 2-17-21](#)

[Experience Event: Movie Matinees](#)

[Experience Event: Sporting Event](#)

[Experience Event: St. Patrick's Day Dinner](#)

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## **IMPACT OF STAFF VACCINATION RATES**

As you can see, staff vaccination rates are impacting how much and how fast we can reopen programs. Please have direct conversations with your staff about the COVID-19 vaccine. We understand that there are medical reasons to not take the vaccine. Beyond that, there is still a large group of people who are simply saying no to it - beyond health conditions.

The manager's role is to talk to them, provide whatever information they need to be comfortable with the vaccine. Talk to them about your own experience getting the vaccine and why you chose to do so. Our RNs are available to speak with them individually if they choose to do so. In certain situations, we can also have our MDs available to talk with staff. For the safety, health, and mental wellbeing of staff and people we support we need more people to get vaccinated. And, as we discussed at the Management Meetings, there is a definite financial impact to getting to Lexington immunity of 70%. Until we get there, we cannot fully reopen programs or access to the community.

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## **NEW WORKPLACE GROUPS**

**Lexington Champions** - A place to recognize employees who stand out - your Super Stars. We are asking each of you on a monthly basis to think of your employees who really stand out and recognize, appreciate, and thank them for their work here. We will use this information to give out Gratitude Awards. We will also have prizes to give out monthly to those who are nominated - gift cards, etc. Don't forget to tag the staff that you are recognizing, and if they're not on Workplace show them the post and support them getting on the platform.

**Celebrating Abilities** - We are also asking you to take time to recognize the people we support in this group. This is also a great way to engage staff with Workplace, if they want to recognize people here.

Remember: You need an invitation to join Workplace. Please contact Courtney Mickels to get an invite: [MickelC@thearclexington.org](mailto:MickelC@thearclexington.org). Please encourage everyone to join the Lexington conversation on Workplace!

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Dear Lexington Leaders,

Thank you for your help in getting us to this point in the pandemic where no one we support is currently positive! Some of you in the Management Meetings indicated in your break-out sessions

that some of the "Things We Do Well" are the great teamwork that is taking place between Day Hab and Residential staff, how the procedures for PPE have helped us mitigate the virus, and our COVID response and how everyone has stepped up. Thank you for participating in those sessions and know that we will share those lists of Things We Do Well and the What We Can Be Doing Differently with the Senior Leadership Team.

Everything you have done, and continue to do, whether yourselves or in supporting your staff has gotten us to this point. And we truly appreciate all of your efforts and surely hope that we continue forward. Reopening programs and services is so important for everyone in the Lexington family.

We also understand that there was a lot of information shared today and that is included in this correspondence. If you have any questions or need clarification please reach out to your Director for guidance.

Don't forget about the TOP WORKPLACE email that will be coming out next week. Let's show the world how wonderful our Lexington family is!

***Shaloni & Dan***

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***This newsletter will be archived at the following link:***  
***<https://thearclexington.org/lex-leaders-covid-updates>***

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