



## DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

*Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona*

### DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Sent on Behalf of DES/DDD

## CLARIFICATION ON DDD'S OFF-SITE VISITATION GUIDANCE

Target Audience - Qualified Vendors Providing Group Home and Developmental Home Services

Transmittal Date - 12/03/2020

On November 13, 2020, DDD issued [guidance for off-site visitation at congregate settings](#) during periods of moderate or substantial community spread/transmission of COVID-19 in Arizona counties. This guidance is for DDD Group Homes and DDD Developmental Homes to supplement the already existing [ADHS guidelines](#) which specifically relates to DDD ICFs, DDD Nursing Supported Group Homes and Nursing Facilities. The Division has received numerous questions since the guidance was released from the community, specifically about the recommendation for a 14-day quarantine after an off-site visit for members living in a group home or developmental home.

If a member, family members or vendor has concerns about the recommended quarantine upon return from the visit, they should convene a planning meeting with the member's Support Coordinator in advance of the potential off-site visit. The Support Coordinator and planning team will use the [Assessing Risk](#) guidance document that was linked in the November 13 communication during the planning meeting. If a specific risk mitigation plan is identified and the members of the planning team, particularly the vendor and member/family, feel comfortable with the strategies that will be used when the member is visiting off-site, the 14-day quarantine may be waived. These mitigation strategies may include the following examples:

- The member and all those with whom he or she comes into contact will wear a mask and socially distance during the entire visit.
- No one outside their normal 'pod' of family and friends will be present during the visit.
- The entire visit will take place outdoors.

However, if the vendor does not agree (i.e. there are other high risk members in the home, the member is not able to wear a mask at this time), DDD will support the vendor in implementing the 14-day quarantine or other identified mitigation strategies to protect other members in the congregate care setting. As outlined in the [Assessing Risk](#) guidance document, this is not considered a rights restriction.

We recognize that some individuals believe this guidance is too stringent. However, the Division is taking the position of mitigating the spread of COVID-19 to the largest extent possible. Recent data shows that individuals with I/DD enrolled with DDD have a COVID-19 mortality rate that is two times higher than the general population in Arizona. National statistics show the number as three times more likely. To date, our risk mitigation strategies have contributed to the percentage of the DDD population who have tested positive (2.7%) to be substantially lower than the general population in Arizona (4.6%). All individuals supporting DDD members must continue to implement measures to contribute to lower transmission rates among the DDD population, especially when cases are on the rise. Positive member [cases are starting to significantly rise](#) and with the holiday season approaching, mitigating risk to the greatest extent possible remains more important than ever.

Finally, DDD is aware that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recently updated its guidance to include additional options for quarantine length. Under these options, quarantine can end after ten days without a COVID-19 test if the person has reported no symptoms or after seven days with a negative test result if the person has reported no symptoms. The updated CDC guidance also states the following, “CDC continues to endorse quarantine for 14 days and recognizes that any quarantine shorter than 14 days balances reduced burden against a small possibility of spreading the virus. Local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last in the communities they serve, based on local conditions and needs. Follow the recommendations of your local public health department if you need to quarantine.” As such, DDD will continue to follow the lead of ADHS when it comes to recommended quarantine guidelines and will use the ADHS guidance to inform our recommendation for suggested quarantine length. DDD will immediately update vendors should any changes be implemented in the recommended quarantine length.