

Cluster Action Initiative, testing and controlling the spread

November 4, 2020

Dear Families & Staff,

COVID-19, also known as the Coronavirus, is a highly contagious virus that targets the respiratory system. Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.

The CDC and DOH recommend standard universal precautions noted below to protect yourself and loved ones and to reduce the spread of COVID-19, including:

- Avoid close contact with people. Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet apart - social distancing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Wear a mask/face covering, especially when in public.
- Avoid large gatherings.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue, when coughing or sneezing (in the absence of a tissue, cough or sneeze into your shirt sleeve or bent arm).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

As the pandemic continues, we are committed to staying abreast of, and adhering to, health and safety guidelines to slow the spread of the virus and preserve the lives of the people we serve, the staff, and the larger community. We continue to coordinate with OPWDD and other health and human services organizations to closely monitor and align our practices with approved precautions so that we may safely deliver services. Our staff are trained regarding signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and declared precautionary measures outlined by the CDC, WHO, and other public health experts. Staff may also access an administrator for guidance as needed.

Cluster Action Initiative

On October 06, 2020, Governor Cuomo unveiled a plan that noted shutdowns of non-essential businesses and gathering restrictions in four regions in the state with increasing COVID-19 cases, including portions of Brooklyn and Queens. Governor Cuomo also announced a cluster action initiative to address COVID-19 hot spots that cropped up in Brooklyn, Queens, Broome, Orange, and Rockland Counties. Locations were categorized either Red, Orange, or Yellow, based on proximity to the cluster determined to have a high rate of spread and restrictions put in place to control the spread.

Type of Activity	RED	ORANGE	YELLOW
Worship	25% capacity 10 people maximum	33% capacity 25 people maximum	50% capacity
Mass Gathering	Prohibited	10 people maximum, indoor and outdoor	25 people maximum, indoors and outdoors
Businesses	Only essential businesses open	Closing high-risk non-essential business (gyms, personal care, etc.)	Open
Dining	Takeout only	Outdoor dining only, 4 person maximum per table	Indoor and outdoor dining, 4 person maximum per table
Schools	CLOSED Remote-only		Open Mandatory weekly testing of students and teachers/staff for in-person settings. DOH will set percent by Friday.

WEAR A MASK. GET TESTED. SAVE LIVES.

Zone Finder

To help residents determine if they are in the city's COVID-19 hot spots, Mayor de Blasio launched New York City's "zone finder," which can be accessed using this link

<https://nycgov.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/lookup/index.html?appid=021940a41da04314827e2782d3d1986f>

Testing

As a mitigation measure in the context of the cluster action initiative, OPWDD recently distributed guidance recommending that staff and individuals supported undertake weekly COVID-19 testing.

- Information regarding COVID-19 testing is available at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-testing>
- Walk-in testing is available at no cost to you at these NYC Health + Hospitals locations <https://www.nychealthandhospitals.org/covid-19-testing-sites/?redirect¬ification>

Join our efforts to control the spread

At NYFAC, we are taking necessary precautions to ensure the health and safety of the people we serve, our employees, and the many families we interact with. For instance, we are not providing in-person group services in identified hot spots and continue to monitor non-group non-site-based services. Please join our efforts to control the spread of COVID-19 and support our community of families by contacting us if:

- You or someone in your household has had a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

- You or a member of your household has been exposed to someone who is seeking a diagnosis, or has had a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- You receive services from us or another OPWDD provider, and that service is in a RED, ORANGE, or YELLOW zone. Examples of this would be if you attend a program in one of these zones, or if you live in one of these zones and services are provided in your home.

With best regards,

The NYFAC Team