



*Serving Children and Adults with Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities for 70 Years*

---

April 1, 2020

**PAUL TORRES**  
Executive Director

Dear AHRC Suffolk Individuals, Family Members and Staff,

As we actively monitor the COVID-19 Pandemic impacting our country, we continually evaluate the needs of our individuals and staff in order to best protect all while providing the necessary care for our individuals. We are following guidance from our local Health Department, OPWDD and the CDC and we continue to remain in close collaboration with the ARC NY in order to be responsive to the constant evolving protective measures and reporting requirements.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Joseph Cassarini

John Smith

Joseph Zifchock

Currently AHRC Suffolk has 5 individuals in our group residences that have tested positive for COVID-19. In addition, 11 staff members have self-quarantined because they have also tested positive. These are obviously unprecedented times. Our staff is adapting, and often times it seems like every moment brings a new situation or challenge. Our staff is working together and lifting each other up when challenges arise. They push on and persevere for our individuals, to keep them safe, fed, enriched, feeling connected and happy. Residential and Day Services staff, as a team, are stepping up in a truly heroic fashion as warriors on the frontline in our homes.

At this point in time, given the community contagion in all of Suffolk County, we are presuming that every one of our homes has had some level of exposure to COVID-19 and we are acting accordingly. All necessary precautions are being taken including having all staff in all residences wearing protective masks, eyewear and gloves during their shifts. Individuals in all homes are also required to wear face masks at all times. The thorough and extensive cleaning and disinfecting of all homes continues, as does the frequent and consistent handwashing of all staff. Individuals continue to receive instruction and reminders on proper handwashing and social distancing. We are currently putting in place procedures for members of our maintenance department staff to complete grocery shopping with at-the-door delivery for all homes to lessen the possible exposure instances to direct care staff.

On an optimistic note, people are recovering from this virus and we have seen good developments firsthand here at AHRC Suffolk. I am happy to report that two staff members who had tested positive previously have fully recovered and were cleared to return to work as per CDC and DOH guidelines and have done so. Two other staff members who had tested positive have recovered and should be cleared to return to work this weekend. These staff members are eager to get back to providing the best possible care for our individuals and to supporting their fellow colleagues who all rely on them.

I know I have said it in every other update I have sent, but I must say it again. Forging ahead through these unprecedented times is only possible when we continue to work together and know we can lean on each other in these hours of need. Programs and staff working together, staff and family members working together, individuals adapting to changing and challenging situations with the support of their staff and their family members (from a distance), these are the ways we are able to continue caring for the individuals we support and our staff. After all, we are all In It Together (#initttogether).

Stay Well,

Paul H. Torres  
Executive Director

Don't forget! Please send an email (subject: Contact Information) to [info@suffahrc.org](mailto:info@suffahrc.org) and include your name, email address, cell phone number, and the name of the individual(s) in our program that you're connected to. Visit [www.ahrcsuffolk.org](http://www.ahrcsuffolk.org) and [www.Facebook.com/AHRCSuffolk](https://www.facebook.com/AHRCSuffolk) for real-time updates.