



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

March 19, 2020

PAUL TORRES
Executive Director

Dear AHRC Suffolk Individuals, Family Members and Staff,

On March 18, 2020, the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) released the *Health Advisory: COVID-19 Guidance for Operators of IRAs and ICFs Regarding Visitations* to protect and maintain the health and safety of residents and staff during the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak. Effective immediately, AHRC Suffolk will suspend all visitation except when medically or clinically necessary (i.e. visitor is essential to the care of the resident). At AHRC Suffolk we are implementing the following:

- Any visitors meeting these expectations must be screened for symptoms or potential exposure to someone with COVID-19 and the duration and number of visitations will be minimized.
- We will attempt to provide other forms of communication to meet the needs of our residents.
- We will post signage notifying the public of the suspension of visitation in all facility entrances and in parking lots. In addition, these policies will be posted to our agency's website and social media pages.

BOARD MEMBERS
Joseph Cassarini
John Smith
Joseph Zifchock

Additionally, AHRC Suffolk has begun to prepare for the possibility that New York State/Suffolk County may issue a directive to "shelter in place". At this time, we are identifying those employees who would be considered "essential" to provide continuous care to all of our residents. All essential employees will be provided with a letter to identify to law enforcement the need to travel to/from work in case restricted travel is imposed.

The health and safety of the entire AHRC Suffolk community remains our highest priority, especially in these extraordinary times. There are currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in any of our programs. We continue to monitor all guidance from local, state and federal agencies, and will stay in close communication with you about our response as the situation develops.

In order to notify family members of updates, it is imperative that we have current email addresses and cell phone numbers for family members connected to all individuals in our programs.

In this ever-changing climate, mailing updates related to the current crisis through regular mail service is ineffective, as it cannot arrive fast enough, and therefore will no longer continue. For updates that are released nearly every day, I urge you to go to our website (www.ahrcsuffolk.org) and to our Facebook page ([Facebook.com/AHRCsuffolk](https://www.facebook.com/AHRCsuffolk)).

Community is essential in times of crisis, and we appreciate your support, understanding and assistance as we work to sustain our connections in creative ways.

Sincerely,

Paul H. Torres
Executive Director

Please send an email to info@suffahrc.org with the subject "Contact information" 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 and www.facebook.com/AHRCsuffolk for real-time updates.