

DDDS Stage One of Congregate Settings Re-Opening Guidance (tentatively August 3, 2020*):

DDDS is eager to help all of our service recipients begin planning their transitions back to programs and services that were in place before COVID-19 brought those services (and so much more) to a halt. We understand how important these services and activities are for the health and wellness of all who participate and what has been lost without access to them over these many months. While we are excited to begin imagining what life with these services back in place might mean for our communities, we are also mindful of the many challenges that remain, the specific vulnerabilities of many in our community, and our responsibility for ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of those we serve.

With all of that in mind, we want to take this time to share with you our Stage One approach for the re-opening of congregate day service settings. We will begin by making these opportunities available for the least vulnerable members of our community first. This will provide all of us with an opportunity to learn, share, and adapt best practices in these settings while we work to develop suitable practices for serving everyone. We strongly encourage the more vulnerable members of our community to remain in their home settings while this process unfolds.

In order for a service recipient to attend Stage One of congregate day services, the following must occur:

- DDDS will require an acknowledgement form signed by the service recipient/guardian, noting the risk in attending group settings and acknowledging the service recipient's commitment to following the protocols outlined. Note: providers may require their own form of attestation or acknowledgement before service recipients can resume access to programs.
- All service recipients will be required to take temperatures at their homes and to record daily temperature and symptom screenings **before** gaining access to their program. If a temperature over 99.5F (37.5C) is present, the service recipient may not come to the program. If any of the following symptoms are present, they should not attend their day program: chills, cough, shortness of breath, loss of sense of taste or smell, difficulty breathing, fatigue, diarrhea, congestion, runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or muscle/body aches. Service recipients with any of the aforementioned symptoms will not be readmitted to the day program until they have received a negative COVID-19 test.
- All service recipients participating in congregate day service settings must be able to wear a face mask, face covering or face shield during their service delivery time, including during transportation (provider or public). At a minimum, each person should be able to tolerate wearing the mask for durations of at least 30 minutes. It is possible that after 30 minutes, people can be supported to take it down for a brief time and then put back in place.
- Service recipients must be able to comply with social distancing orders that suggest a minimum of 6 feet distance between all individuals. Providers have rearranged their physical spaces to have service recipients at least 6 feet from each other. Please note: if a service recipient cannot comply with this requirement, within reason and with prompts or supports, then Stage One is not the time to return to these settings. Providers will do their best to accommodate service recipients with supports, but they will retain the right to recommend not returning to services if this fundamental expectation cannot be met on a consistent basis.

Congregate Day Service Delivery Expectations:

- All staff will be required to wear a face mask or face shield for their entire shift.
- All staff will be required to take temperatures at their homes and to record daily temperature and symptom screenings **before** gaining access to their job site. If a temperature over 99.5F (37.5C) is present, the staff person may not attend work. If any of the following symptoms are present, they should not attend work: chills, cough, shortness of breath, loss of sense of taste or smell, difficulty breathing, fatigue, diarrhea, congestion, runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or muscle/body aches.
- There will be no group meals served at day program. For providers who serve lunch, it must be provided to service recipients in their program space while maintaining social distancing between people. All utensils must be disposable and trash receptacles should be brought to each person to throw away their trash as opposed to people carrying their trash to the receptacle.
- Providers must have plans in place to clean communal restrooms **at least** every two hours. Shared water fountains may not be used.
- Providers will require frequent hand washing, with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or the use of hand sanitizer throughout the program day for staff and service recipients.

Please note: For those who cannot wear a face mask, face covering or face shield or consistently comply with social distancing requirements and therefore cannot participate in Stage One, modified day services will continue to be offered remotely where possible. Day Habilitation Exceptions will continue for those individuals, to maintain approval for the additional hours of service while the service recipients remain out of day services. For those service recipients not living in a provider managed setting, contact your Community Navigator or MCO Care Coordinator to discuss in-home supports such as respite.

For those living in a provider managed setting: Service recipients and guardians must be consulted before a return to day services can proceed. If **anyone** in the home is vulnerable (based on age or medical condition), it will be at the discretion of the service provider to determine whether it is safe for individuals from that home to attend congregate day services keeping in mind an individual's ability to adhere to the requirements for hygiene and social distancing outlined in this document.

*If **anyone** living in a provider managed setting site has COVID-19, **no one** should attend congregate day services until the virus has cleared the home. A negative COVID-19 lab test is necessary to resume services. Any individual can schedule a test at: <https://delaware.curativeinc.com>.*

For those living at home: Families need to determine whether their loved one's potential exposure is worth the risk of potentially bringing the virus home. If a service recipient lives with someone who is vulnerable, attention to the risk factors should be strongly considered.

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*August 3rd is the earliest start date for congregate settings to re-open. Some providers may not be ready to open then. Check with your service provider for more details about your situation.