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HOPE Group has created this COVID-19 FAQs document to provide updated information for employees and families receiving services. This document is available on our website and will be updated whenever changes are necessary. Email announcements will also be sent noting any significant changes.

This document contains the following sections:

1. General FAQs and information about COVID-19
2. Precautions taken by HOPE Group to reduce risk
3. FAQs for HOPE Group employees
4. FAQs for HOPE Group families
5. Direct Service Safety Protocol

## **General FAQs and Information about COVID-19**

### **What is COVID-19?**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is responding to an outbreak of respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in China and which has been detected globally, including in the United States. The virus has been named “SARS-CoV-2” and the disease it causes has been named “coronavirus disease 2019” (abbreviated “COVID-19”).

### **What are the main symptoms of COVID-19?**

The following symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

### **How is COVID-19 spread?**

The CDC reports that the virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person through respiratory droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, particularly if you are in close contact (the CDC states within about 6 feet) of the infected person. It may also be possible to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

### **How can I help prevent illness or the spread of COVID-19?**

Per the CDC, the best way to prevent the virus is to avoid being exposed to the virus. This virus is thought to spread mainly person-to-person. Please see the CDC website listed below for more information.

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- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
  - Avoid touching your face, mouth, nose, and eyes
  - Cover sneezes and coughs with a tissue, or use the inside of your elbow, and throw used tissues away immediately.
  - If you are sick, wear a facemask when you are around others
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily

Where can I find out more information about COVID-19?

The following websites offer up-to-date information on COVID-19 nationally and locally (Arizona):

- Centers for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- Maricopa County Public Health Dept: <https://www.maricopa.gov/5460/Coronavirus-Disease-2019>
- AZ Department of Health Services: <https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-diseaseepidemiology/index.php#novel-coronavirus-home>

## **Precautions taken by HOPE Group to reduce risk**

### **What general precautions are being taken?**

- Any gatherings, tours, classes or events have been moved to an online platform, cancelled, or postponed.
- HOPE Group has updated our illness policy to reflect additional COVID-19 symptoms. All staff are directed to not come into work if they are feeling or displaying any symptoms, and to seek medical treatment as needed.
- HOPE Group employees are subject to travel restrictions to levels 2 and 3 zones. Quarantines may be imposed for high risk areas or activities.
- All staff are directed to practice social distancing (no handshakes, 6 feet apart, etc.) to whatever extent possible. (This does not apply to direct care providers and clients)

### **What is being done to reduce the risk of exposure in the HOME environment?**

- All parents and providers are asked to follow HOPE Group's emergency illness policy confirming that they have no symptoms or unusually high probability of exposure.
- A safety protocol has been implemented with all providers to ensure all key preventative measures are being taken.

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- Home based-providers are being limited to as few of client homes as possible during the COVID-19 state of emergency.
  - BCBA services have been shifted to telehealth wherever possible, decreasing exposure to families and employees.

## **What additional measures are in place to reduce the risk of exposure in the OFFICE environment?**

- Meetings and interviews are being conducted virtually whenever possible.
- Clinical staff are doing administrative duties remotely from home to avoid going into the office.
- All staff are directed to wash their hands in the nearest restroom upon entering.
- Signs are posted on office doors asking delivery carriers to leave packages outside the door.
- All treatment materials are cleaned thoroughly between travel distances.
- No more than 10 people at a time may gather in any area of the office (when necessary).

## **FAQs for HOPE Group employees**

### **What should I do if I feel sick, or someone in my household is ill?**

Staff members who have symptoms of a fever paired with acute respiratory illness (i.e., cough, shortness of breath) are to stay home in order to self-quarantine for 14 days or have a medical provider's clearance. If someone in your home has symptoms, monitor your own symptoms closely and err on the side of caution if you have COVID-19 related symptoms.

Habilitation Providers who are not able to work scheduled habilitation or respite shifts should communicate directly with their client families. All other staff should report directly to their supervisors.

***All staff should suspend all work activities, self-quarantine and notify the main office immediately if you are diagnosed with COVID-19.*** Call the main number and reach the emergency line.

### **What if I have had contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19?**

If employees have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, they must cancel any upcoming sessions and immediately notify Human Resources. HOPE Group will generally follow the guidelines set forth by the AZ Department of Health Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. At this time, that guideline is for individuals to self-quarantine for a period of 14 days. Category A employees should notify their supervisor as soon as possible. Habilitation & Respite Providers may call the main office or email: [whitney@hopegroupaz.com](mailto:whitney@hopegroupaz.com)

### **What should I be doing to ensure client safety if I am conducting services?**

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Any staff experiencing fever paired with shortness of breath and or coughing should cancel in-home appointments until cleared by a doctor. HOPE Group recommends checking your temperature if you have any suspicion of a possible fever, especially within 2 hours of providing services, and follow the above protocol if a fever of over 100.4° F is recorded. Follow all other recommended guidelines as needed listed by the CDC above.

## FAQs for HOPE Group Families

### **When should I reschedule or cancel service appointments?**

In the event that any member of the client's same residence demonstrates any of the following symptoms of COVID-19, please contact Stacy Smith (**Stacy Smith: [ssmith@hopegroupaz.com](mailto:ssmith@hopegroupaz.com)**), HOPE Group's Manager of ABA Services. Any observed symptomology from the list below, will result in a temporary discontinuation of services. HOPE Group employees who demonstrate any of the below listed symptoms must also contact Stacy Smith. Employees who demonstrate symptomology will be asked to implement a 14-day self-quarantine.

Fever combined with any of the following:

- Cough
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

### **How do I cancel a scheduled appointment?**

For habilitation and respite please contact your provider directly. For ABA services, please contact your Behavior Technician and Behavior Analyst.

### **What if some in my home has had contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19?**

If anyone in your home has been exposed to someone with COVID-19, cancel any upcoming sessions with providers and immediately notify the main office. The CDC has recommended that anyone who has been exposed to someone with the COVID-19 virus should quarantine themselves for a 2-week period. If someone in the client household is self-quarantined, face to face services must be suspended until that quarantine is lifted and all members of the household are symptom-free for the recommended period.

For ABA Families: If face to face services are placed on hold, in order to ensure continuity of care, parent implementation of treatment plan goals will be requested with coaching via tele-practice. HOPE Group's Clinical Director will discuss details with you.

### **What can I do to help maintain a safe working environment for HOPE Group staff?**

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If you are receiving in-home services, please ensure a safe environment by following all of the recommended protocols for preventing illness, including sanitizing frequently-touched surfaces. For the health and safety of our employees, Each family is asked to follow the CDC's guidelines for protecting their home (found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/protect-home.html>).

*Given the official pandemic status, we will err on the side of caution and will cancel or discontinue sessions if any symptoms are present. Thank you for your understanding and please contact us with any question or concerns. Please see next section for our direct service safety protocol.*

## **Direct Service Safety Protocol**

During this period of caution regarding exposure risk for COVID-19, all HOPE Group staff members and parents/guardians must communicate with regularly. Based on compliance with HOPE Group's illness policy, determine if it is appropriate to conduct services as planned or to cancel the session.

HOPE Group is dedicated to continuing to help our families during these challenging times of social distancing due to the contagious nature of COVID-19. All employees are to follow the precautions in this protocol when involved in serving HOPE Group's families.

### HOPE Group employees must take the following action before entering client's service location:

- Check your HOPE Group email concerning any health and safety updates.
- Sanitize hands with hand sanitizer containing a minimum of 60% alcohol or wash your hands.
- Disinfect all service materials brought into the client's home (prior to each session).

### HOPE Group employees must take the following action while in client's homes:

- Wash your hands frequently.
- Avoid touching your own eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid shaking hands or physically interacting with those other than the client.
- Remove your shoes prior to entering a client's home.
- Follow HOPE Group's most current illness policy.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash hands.

### Travel Restriction Requirement:

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## Frequently Asked Questions- COVID-19



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All recreational travel planned or recently taken in or out of the country, must be reported to Human Resources on the appropriate form to discuss possible restrictions and quarantines, as mandated by CDC guidelines.

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