



March 11, 2020

Dear Friends of Holy Childhood:

As you know, the situation regarding the spread of the COVID-19 virus presents an ever-changing landscape. We continue to monitor the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and local and state health department updates on an ongoing basis (in fact, just today, prior to this writing, we attended a briefing for community-based human service providers by Dr. Michael Mendoza, Monroe County Commissioner of Public Health.)

As always, the updates you will receive from Holy Childhood will be fact-based—not fear-based. Our communication is not to elevate concern and alarm, but to inform. **However; there are some very important updates which will be communicated in this correspondence, one of which prompts me to ask for your patience and understanding when you come to visit us, because it will directly impact the greeting you receive.**

This information impacts anyone who comes to enter Holy Childhood, effective immediately, and this is a new practice based upon guidance issued by our regulators for prevention of the spread of the COVID-19 virus. It comes from OPWDD, and is based on the most current information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New York State Department of Health.

In this case, the facts are provided by our regulators about what we need to do for the foreseeable future, and, frankly, as Dr. Mendoza discussed with providers today, such guidelines are quite common sense as it would pertain to ANY virus, from COVID-19 to the flu and the common cold.

The guidelines will help us to manage the potential spread of virus, as well as manage people who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

Starting immediately, our front-line reception team is now mandated to ask visitors (no matter how often they come into the building) a series of questions. This includes ANYONE who comes into our building—families, bus drivers, transportation providers, care coordinators, volunteers, tours, board members, etc.

If you come to Holy Childhood, or any agency regulated by OPWDD, and likely other regulatory bodies, you will be asked:

- **Have you traveled to a country for which the CDC has issued a Level 2 or 3 travel designation within the last 14 days?; (as of 3/11/2020 Italy, China, South Korea, Iran, Venezuela, Africa, Japan, Asia, Nigeria and Republic of Congo)**
- **To your knowledge, have you had contact with any Persons Under Investigation (PUIs) for COVID-19 within the last 14 days, OR with anyone with known COVID-19?; and**
- **Do you have any symptoms of a respiratory infection (e.g., cough, sore throat, fever, or shortness of breath)?**



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Upon screening, if a potential visitor answers “No” to questions (1) and (2) but “Yes” to question (3), you will be asked to restrict visitation until you are no longer exhibiting any such symptoms. In the event it is agreed upon that a visit will occur, taking into consideration any heightened risk factors (e.g. the medical status of the person being visited or others in program), you may be asked to wear a mask or keep a visit to a contained area, but best practice would dictate postponing the visit.)

For those potential visitors who answer “Yes” to questions (1) or (2), but “No” to question (3) (i.e., reports no symptoms of a respiratory infection), we will decline your request for visitation and you will be instructed to contact the NYS Department of Health for further direction.

For those potential visitors who answer “Yes” to questions (1) and/or (2), and also “Yes” to question (3), (i.e., reports having symptoms) you will be instructed to immediately contact your medical provider and Local Health Department, and to call 911 if you are experiencing serious symptoms (e.g., shortness of breath). You will also be instructed to notify the receiving medical provider and transporter in advance of potential concern for COVID-19.

To the greatest extent possible, if your visit to Holy Childhood is being coordinated ahead of time, you may be asked these questions prior to scheduling by the meeting/tour organizer, which may lead to cancellation of the meeting depending on your answers.

We have asked all staff to think about these same guidelines to which we are holding our visitors. We ask that, if they are ill, they not report to work. This pertains to ALL forms of illness, not just the threat of COVID-19.

As always, we continue our best-practices on hand-washing and using disinfectant. Additionally, we strongly suggest that we refrain from shaking hands in our workplace; while I know it’s very difficult to refrain from physical contact particularly when wanting to show our mutual affinity for the people we serve, but we will all do our best to use the “elbow bump” versus hand-to-hand contact.

Your attention is very much appreciated to ensure the health and safety of our valued team, the wonderful people we serve, and all of our friends of Holy Childhood.

Let’s stay healthy.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donna M. Dedee".

Donna M. Dedee
President and CEO