

Greetings.

Our thoughts are with you during these challenging times. While much is still unknown, Community Options Integrated Services is moving forward by taking steps to maximize social distancing throughout the agency and implement best practices to reduce risk and spread of the COVID -19 virus to our families, staff, and clients.

More than ever, we must pull together as a community, and I'd like to thank you in advance for your time, commitment, patience, and partnership throughout the coming weeks. Words cannot express how much we care about our clients, staff, and family home providers. We at COIS will do everything within our power to assure that quality care continues to be carried out in the safest of environments.

Our top priority is the health and safety of each person being supported and their immediate circle of support. They go hand in hand. **So first and foremost, we must stay home when we are sick. Second, we all need to practice Universal Precautions and wash our hands regularly, cover our mouths when we cough or sneeze (preferably into our elbows), and then wash our hands again. Thirdly, we need to limit exposure to others who may be carriers, infected, and/or have contact with those who may be at high risk.**

*Effective today and through at least March 31<sup>st</sup>, the following agency directives shall be in effect.*

- If any client, COIS Family Home Provider, residents of a family home, or members of an individual's immediate circle of support should become ill, please reach out to us immediately so that we can address the situation. We are all available 24 hours a day via the COIS message center.
- If you suspect that you may have had contact with someone who is ill, but did not know it at the time, please do not hesitate to contact a health professional by phone and inform us as soon as possible.
- I trust that each of you are taking precautions to sanitize your home and contact environments to minimize risk. Thank you for your continued efforts, and please continue to do so.
- COIS will inform outside consultants (i.e. behaviorist, OT, etc.) to cancel family home face-to-face visits through at least the end of March.
- COIS will submit a formal request/statement for all regional center staff to refrain from any regional center visits to the family home during this State of Emergency. We will request that all future meetings and visits from the regional center through the end of March be completed electronically and/or via phone conference. Should regional center staff show up to your door for a quarterly, please direct them to our attention in the most polite and professional way as usual.
- COIS staff will refrain from home visits through the end of the month. We will move forward case by case via teleconference, Skype, etc. However, there may be special

circumstances when your CLC may need to meet face to face or join up for an appointment.

- Closure of day and work/programs has the greatest impact and interruption of service. I am left no recourse, but to ask you to hang in there as this really is a State Of Emergency and the most unusual set of community circumstances that I believe we have ever had to face. Nothing is taken for granted. So, all that you have to offer in the way of support to our clients is appreciated, outstanding, generous, and most responsible.
- Case-by-case review for each person served and each family will take place to assess any special needs or accommodations. Natural families will also be contacted with updates in the next day or so.
- Due to an abundance of day program closures, COIS will be requesting additional funding for coverage from the regional center. It has been the practice of the State of California to supplement program closure/losses, so I anticipate a similar response and hope that relief will be provided within a reasonable time frame. I will advocate strongly for this and keep you apprised of our progress.
- The upcoming mandatory in-services through May are postponed until further notice. We are considering an online alternative to keep up with our contractual agreements, statute, and regulations. I anticipate we will resume meeting again in person by June 2020.
- Today I will be meeting with our management team to discuss paths of communication. Email will be one, but more importantly the COI-CA Therap Dashboard (computer login) for more intimate agency communication and The COIS Facebook Page ( <https://www.facebook.com/CommunityOptionsIncorporated/>) for updates and postings. Please do keep regular watch for any changes.

**Please take a moment to update our office after receipt of this correspondence by sending us your name, updated email, and updated telephone number. You may do so by emailing *NOCORONA@communityoptions.com*.**

Thank you for your patience, understanding, and support. Please do reach out to your COIS case management staff with any specifics relative to you, your family, employment, or people that we support. We can be messaged and reached at **(800)731-1958**. This number is available 24 hours a day, simply ask for your party.

I encourage everyone to stay tuned to reliable media and maintain awareness regarding this matter. The CDC is a great resource, and I have listed others at the bottom of this page. I will do my best to maintain our communication with each of the regional centers, with hope of a resolution addressing day program closure and the impact on our services.

My apologies for any inconvenience this unfortunate situation may be causing you. I look forward to getting back to normal in all the very best of health and happiness. Things change quickly, so we will have to adjust and learn as we go. Let's all stay apprised with news from our

state and local government agencies, and CDC. Together we can get through this. Meanwhile, let's all work together to overcome this virus. It takes a village!

**Please read the attached handouts and share these practices with our clients, your family, coworkers, and others.**

**Sincerest regards,**  
Ingrid V. Rushing  
Founder CEO

Links/Attachments:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Coronavirus%20Disease%202019%20and%20Food%20Industry.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

[https://lanterman.org/uploads/news/Steps\\_to\\_Stop\\_the\\_Spread\\_of\\_Respiratory\\_Viruses\\_+COVID-19\\_English+Spanish.pdf](https://lanterman.org/uploads/news/Steps_to_Stop_the_Spread_of_Respiratory_Viruses_+COVID-19_English+Spanish.pdf)