



Concerning COVID-19 and Seven Hills ASPiRE! Program Closures

July 8th, 2020

Members of the Seven Hills ASPiRE! Community:

We're writing with an important update regarding the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, and the plans to reopen Massachusetts. While phase three of Governor Baker's plan to reopen Massachusetts began on July 6th, we are encouraged by our funders, DDS and MassHealth, to continue outreach in July and prepare to reopen in August. As such **all Seven Hills ASPiRE! service locations will remain closed through July 31st, and will partially reopen on Monday, August 3rd. Please note that not all persons served will be able to return at once, due to capacity and other health and safety restrictions.**

Our understanding is that transportation will not be widely available until September through the vendors that previously provided it – we will need your help in getting persons served to and from day program locations. Program directors and senior staff will be reaching out to you to review a readiness-to-return tool, including the availability of transportation supports; **your review of this tool is a required precondition for return.** We must prioritize persons served to return based on risk, benefit, and availability of transportation. A significant factor in this prioritization will be access to your own transportation.

We have received preliminary guidance and are working to implement. Face coverings will be required for all persons served, visitors, and staff. All lunches must be cold lunches; please note that we cannot refrigerate lunches – provide your own ice packs as necessary. Should either the face covering or cold lunch condition pose a hardship for you or your loved one, please reach out to your program director. While we can consider limited exceptions, these will also impact the risk and benefit consideration, as well as prioritization for return. Our live video programming and check-ins over Zoom will continue, to allow for remote and hybrid models where appropriate.

These capacity restrictions have required us to freeze some staff positions. As capacity restrictions will persist until there are vaccines or effective therapeutics, we cannot hold those positions. Where possible we have transferred impacted staff to other SHF affiliates, or to modified roles within ASPiRE!. In addition, capacity and small group restrictions require revised staffing and group assignments. Program directors will reach out to you with group assignments for persons served once we are closer to reopening. Please note that we must complete the above risk and benefit assessment, including transportation availability, before group assignments can be completed.

Vocational services and supports funded by the Mass Rehabilitation Commission will continue with additional precautions for safety, as well as increased use of video and remote technologies. Community-Based Day Supports will be provided in small groups in the community as much as is feasible given other restrictions. Day Habilitation and Adult Day Health will resume in-program with capacity restrictions and precautions to limit transmission, such as persons served remaining with the same small group of peers throughout the day.

ASPiRE! program directors and members of our leadership team are participating actively each week in trade association and state funder workgroups on reopening. The Executive Office of Health and Human Services



is requiring significant capacity and programming restrictions for health and safety upon reopening, to help limit the spread of the novel coronavirus. Returning to day service locations is a big change, and we are working to implement best practices for a safe return. We thank you for your participation and your patience in an uncertain time.

For additional information, please consider the following resources:

- The Seven Hills ASPIRE! Community Facebook page, where Zoom schedules are posted: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/aspirecommunitygroup>
- The Seven Hills website, where regular updates will be posted: www.sevenhills.org
- The Mass.gov coronavirus page: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-updates-and-information>
- The CDC's coronavirus page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>
- The Mass Options website, covering services available to seniors and those with developmental differences: www.massoptions.com or by phone at 1.844.422.6277

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Hayston".

Dr. Jay Hayston, LP.D, MBA

Vice President | Seven Hills ASPIRE!

150 Goddard Memorial Drive | Worcester MA 01603

Office: 508.796.1503 | Fax: 508.796.1598 | Email: jhayston@sevenhills.org

Program Locations and Contact Persons

- **799 West Boylston Street Day Habilitation**
 - o Program Director Katie Kozlowski: kkozlowski@sevenhills.org and 508.796.1928
- **Adult Day Health**
 - o Program Director Kelly Clifford: kclifford@sevenhills.org and 508.983.1366
- **Devens Community Based Day and Employment Supports**
 - o Program Director Tracey Hecker: thecker@sevenhills.org and 978.391.8221
- **Devens Day Habilitation**
 - o Program Director Laura Seppa: lseppa@sevenhills.org and 978.391.8226
- **Employment Services (including independent employment supports, Pre-ETS, CIES, and SES)**
 - o Program Director Karen Chiurri: kchiurri@sevenhills.org and 508.981.0447
- **Goddard Memorial Drive Community Based Day and Employment Supports**
 - o Program Director Jen Keaney: jkeaney@sevenhills.org and 508.796.1502
- **Goddard Memorial Drive, Worcester Day Habilitation**
 - o Program Director Cathi Joseph: cjoseph@sevenhills.org and 508.796.1518
- **Milford Community Based Day and Employment Supports**
 - o Program Director Fedna Laurent: flaurent@sevenhills.org and 508.458.4500
- **Seven Hills Food Services, including Hope Avenue Kitchen and the Seven Hills Cafes**
 - o Program Director Alexi Koroskenyi: akoroskenyi@sevenhills.org and 508.826.8374