



# Division of Developmental Disabilities

## COVID-19 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

April 10, 2020

<p>How long can masks be worn?</p>	<p>Due to the shortage of PPE, it is recommended that masks are worn until broken or soiled. Conservation of masks is critical due to shortage of supplies.</p>
<p>If a person living in a congregate setting needs to be isolated due to COVID-19, what options are available?</p>	<p>Group homes and all other communal living arrangements should continue their routine hygiene and infection control policy and procedures. Communal living places people at risk for all kinds of communicable disease even in normal times. Good hand hygiene and social distancing will help during this time of heightened anxiety. If any member of a group home develops symptoms of infection, their primary care physician should be notified and if necessary, the Dept of Health. RIDOH continues to prioritize those who live in communal living for testing, at this time. RIDOH works with communal residential facilities to provide best practices for infection control and reduction of spread should a resident develop COVID-19.</p>
<p>Will RIDOH recognize providers as essential health care workers?</p>	<p>BHDDH is actively working with RIDOH and all appropriate State agencies on designation for staff that provide services, on behalf of BHDDH.</p>
<p>Can you assist with obtaining necessary PPE? Please clarify if staff and residents should wear masks and who will supply them?</p>	<p>BHDDH received a shipment of PPE on 4/1/20 and will be contacting providers for PPE distribution and to obtain additional lists of PPE needed.</p>
<p>Now that testing is being increased to 1000 per day, will you test health care and essential workers proactively to prevent spread?</p>	<p>At this time, testing is being performed on individuals with symptoms only.</p>
<p>If someone goes to the ER, what is the protocol for individuals when they return home (not admitted)? Do we isolate for 14 days?</p>	<p>If an individual must go to the ER, and they return to a residential setting, the best practice is to isolate for 14 days</p>
<p>When can a person who works in a group home return to work if they have symptoms but no test is available? There is guidance on the CDC website, but Dr. Scott indicated that people should return to work if they don't have a fever. Is there</p>	<p>The CDC guidance related to return to work, can be found here: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/hcp-return-work.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/hcp-return-work.html</a>. Testing for healthcare workers is prioritized by the RIDOH. Healthcare workers should indicate their profession to their PCP, for prioritization of testing.</p>

written guidance from DOH for health workers and return to work?	
If someone displays one of the symptoms but no temperature, should we be calling the primary care, and now with expanded testing ask for person to be tested?	Any known possible COVID-19 symptom should be discussed with the PCP, for further guidance. Testing for healthcare workers is prioritized by the RI DOH. Healthcare workers should indicate their profession to their PCP, for prioritization of testing. Please see some additional information from the CDC, here: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html</a>
Is there an ability for testing to be done at the homes rather than a test site?	At this time, no. Testing is being offered by RI DOH at designated testing locations.
How long does it take for symptoms to present after an exposure?	Symptoms from COVID-19 can appear 2-14 days after exposure. Please see some additional information from the CDC, here: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html</a>
What is the most common mode of transmission? Exposure to respiratory droplets, airborne particles, or touching an infected person or surface then touching your face?	Information on COVID-19 transmission, can be found here: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html</a>
If someone had the virus with mild to no symptoms can they contract the virus again? If so, would the second exposure be worse? If someone has a mild form of virus, can it mutate and can they contract again or are they considered immune?	New information on COVID-19 is coming out daily, at this time, this is still being studied
What is the level of risk of the virus being transmitted through stool?	Currently, this is believed to be of low risk.
Are homemade masks effective?	Homemade masks are better than not using a mask. If PPE is not available, it is suggested to wear a homemade mask. Additional information on homemade masks, can be found here: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html</a>