

## **UCP OF GREATER CLEVELAND STAFF UPDATE – MARCH 17, 2020**

### **Closure Update**

UCP of Greater Cleveland is not alone in announcing its suspension of program services (with the exception of our group homes and group employment sites) in that most, if not all, Ohio DD providers of facility-based services have now closed their doors for at least 2-3 weeks. This unprecedented, statewide and nationwide event has brought on many unknowns in terms of when we can resume services, how we can recover the agencies' significant loss of revenue, how compensation and benefits will be affected, and what type of local, state or federal relief we may see in terms of dollars and forgiveness of payments.

The UCP leadership team is actively working around the clock to address all challenges attached to our suspension of most program services and all other departments' temporary closures. We are in constant touch with all sources of information and are working together to share, interpret, and apply everything we are learning. Governmental agencies have not yet committed to much as they, too, are still in the process of understanding the negative impact this COVID-19 virus event is having and will have on their ability to offer financial support. Very little definitive information has been released up to this point and it is our hope that we will soon learn of at least SOME detail to guide our decisions and communications with you.

At 4:15 today we received the following message from OPRA, our state trade association: "We are working with DODD on a plan to provide fiscal sustainability over the next several weeks. We are planning another member call tomorrow afternoon at 3:30 where we will be able to provide more information regarding the direction for day services. Expect an announcement to go out shortly."

We are doing our very best to come up with solutions that best meet the needs of staff, clients and the agency. I commit to offering you a daily report in the form of email and texted messages and making myself and staff available to answer all of your questions as best we can.

### **Compensation and Benefits Update & Alternative Work Opportunities Update**

Our current priority is determining your compensation as this period of shutdown continues. We are considering all options while balancing your needs with the agency's ability to recover from our tremendous losses in revenue during this closure. I wrote in my update of yesterday that, while we figure all of this out, we are offering alternative work opportunities with both UCP's group homes (contact Sam at [spuccinelli@ucpcleveland.org](mailto:spuccinelli@ucpcleveland.org) or 216-409-0709) as well as other local DD provider agencies in need of direct support staff to meet their clients' residential services needs. If you have not been in touch with Bob Taylor about working in a direct support capacity for another service provider, I encourage you to consider it and reach out to Bob at [btaylor@ucpcleveland.org](mailto:btaylor@ucpcleveland.org) or 216-453-4954 ASAP. There will be many direct support staff in town, such as yourselves, potentially competing for these openings with other providers that will offer a premium rate of pay. Please note that you would maintain your employment with UCP during a temporary placement with another agency.

### **Prioritize Your Health and Well-Being**

Effective Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Wolstein Center, Westlake and Highland Hills locations will be on lockdown allowing only those staff with prior approval to enter the premises. We understand that group home and nursing staff will need access to supplies and can easily gain approval from their supervisors. If staff who are working remotely beyond this week require access after this week, please contact Beth at blucas@ucpcleveland or (216) 534-9960 to request access at that time. We must limit everyone's exposure to the COVID-19 virus!

### **Thank You**

The group homes are operating well! Thank you to all of you who are working hard to protect and maintain our Edendale and Memphis clients' health. We have increased your hourly wages and are doing everything possible to fill all vacant shifts. Please take care of your own health with diligent handwashing and following of all medical protocols. We also thank our OakLeaf Group Employment staff members at the Oatey Company and the Cleveland Clinic as well as our OakLeaf Community Employment staff. And please let your supervisors know of anything you need during this trying time.

**Please feel free to call Beth Lucas at her personal cell at 216-534-9960 or your supervisor at any time. You are also welcomed to call me directly at my personal cell at 440-454-1363. In the meantime, I plan to update you on a daily basis. Please know that we are doing our very best to meet your needs and the needs of all of the individuals we serve.**

Thank you,  
Trish and UCP Leadership Team

**P.S. These messages will become shorter as time goes on!**