

Friday, April 3, 2020

To All LifeLinks CLASS Staff:

We have come to that point that we all have been dreading, and today I must report that one of our colleagues has tested positive for COVID-19. Given the increase in community spread over the past few days, I fear that this will not be the last such report that we receive. We're all sending our best wishes for health and safety to this valued member of our team.

I know this is unsettling news, and I want to assure you of a few things.

- We have – and will continue to – follow all guidance from the CDC and state and local health officials to manage our critical programs and services in as safe a manner as possible.
- Staff who have worked in close physical contact with the individual who has tested positive have received a personal phone call today. If you have not received a phone call, it's because you were not in close contact with the staff person who tested positive
- Families and guardians of individuals who were in close contact with the staff person are also being contacted today to inform them of the positive test result.
- Going forward we will continue to make these personal calls in the event that members of the LifeLinks CLASS team are tested and confirmed to be positive.
- PPE (gloves and masks) are being provided to all staff who have direct contact with individuals, they will be educated on their proper use.

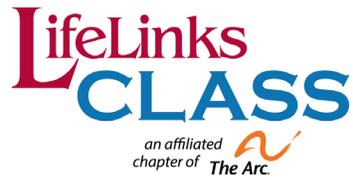
The bottom line is these preventative measures are only part of the solution. In order to maintain the integrity of our programs and to keep you and your co-workers safe, I am personally asking you to continue to do the following:

- If you are sick, stay home. Call us to let us know, and immediately call your PCP.
- Report your symptoms to your PCP and tell them specifically "I am a health care worker who is in close contact with people with developmental disabilities who I support."
- Don't assume that your doctor understands the critical role you play in supporting a vulnerable population. Unfortunately, you might need to insist on being tested for COVID-19 because of your status as health care worker. I encourage you to advocate for yourself in this situation.

CHELMSFORD 4 Omni Way | Chelmsford, MA 01824 | 978-349-3000
LAWRENCE 1 Parker Street | Lawrence, MA 01843 | 978-975-8587
WILMINGTON 50-T Concord Street | Wilmington, MA 01887 | 978-657-4273

WWW.LIFELINKSCLASS.ORG





- If you are tested for COVID-19, because you are considered a health care worker, it is imperative that you report your test results to your manager. We will protect your rights under HIPAA, but LifeLinks CLASS is obligated to report those results to the local Board of Health, DDS, and ultimately the Massachusetts Department of Public Health as those agencies work collaboratively to flatten the curve.
- Your PCP will work with you – and the local Board of Health will work with us –to determine the criteria for your return to work.

One last and important note that I can't stress enough – you don't have to worry about reporting a positive test to your manager. We are here for you and have put policies in place to support you as your health and safety is our most important priority. Remember, the consequences to the medically fragile people that we all support are dire if they are infected with COVID-19. Now, more than ever, we all have to support one another.

I know that this is an extremely difficult time for all of us. The COVID-19 task force is meeting regularly, and quite frankly the guidance is changing and evolving almost daily. But we're all in this together! With continued compliance in terms of the preventative measures that the COVID-19 task force has been in place, and open communication, we can and will get through this.

Thank you for all your extraordinary efforts during this most extraordinary time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean M. Phelps".

Jean M. Phelps, CEO