

Day Programs Participant Handbook

COVID-19 Processes,
Protocols, and
Guidelines

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Produced by:
Incompass Human Services
COVID-19 Task Force



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From the CEO

#ForEachOther

Where else but Incompass would pool noodles turn into the theme of a program plan? No matter the circumstance or the challenge facing us, the innovative and collaborative spirit of our Care Champions perseveres! We are approaching this challenge as we do every challenge we face – with open minds and open hearts.



Incompass CEO Jean Phelps

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected nearly every aspect of our daily lives, creating significant hardships for the entire Incompass community. Over the past few months, we've suspended programs, launched virtual programs, and implemented new policies and procedures to ensure the health and safety of every individual, caregiver, direct care professional, community member, and family member at Incompass.

As we begin to lift the suspension on our facility-based programs, I can't stress enough that the programs we return to will look vastly different to the programs we left. This is by design, as the Incompass COVID-19 task force has created comprehensive plans to facilitate safe and secure operation of our Omni Way and Parker Street locations.

While the experiences will be different, I want to emphasize that programs will not only be safe, but fun and engaging! (I can almost guarantee that this is the only plan incorporating colorful pool noodles!)

In the enclosed document, you will find detailed information about these plans and how they will impact you and your loved ones, as well as resources to help guide you through the ongoing process that includes:

- **a phased repopulation of our day programs,**
- **new community expectations and support,**
- **proactive monitoring of health conditions,**
- **contingencies for containment as necessary, and**
- **a rethinking of program space.**

Again, thank you so much for your cooperation and understanding! We do this #ForEachOther...

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Jean Phelps".



Introduction

Congregate Care Facility-Based Day Programs at Incompass

As we lift the suspension on day programs, Incompass's top priority remains the safety and wellbeing of our program participants, caregivers, and staff. We will be vigilant in our pursuit of bringing as many of you as possible back to our facilities and into our communities, but the programs you are returning to will look far different than the programs you left.

Our new safety guidelines are rooted in five core areas:

1. Ongoing repopulation of Chelmsford and Lawrence locations

Eligible day program participants and staff will be welcomed back in phases in accordance with eligibility requirements. Entrance to the buildings will be restricted so that we can monitor the health and safety of individuals as they enter and exit the premises.

2. Enhanced set of community expectations and support

Our collective health is dependent on the cooperation and coordination of every member of our community. We also want to make sure that every individual is aware of the in-person and virtual resources Incompass provides that can help them through difficult circumstances.

3. Social distancing, facemasks, and reduced capacity of space

We practice social distancing in all of our programs, reducing the capacity of participants in each room. All staff are required to wear masks, and we are strongly encouraging participants who are able to do so to wear a mask during program.

4. Plan for monitoring health conditions to ensure detection of infection

Using a combination of self-diagnostic tools, symptom surveys, and general wellbeing checks, the agency will help support the health of all members of our community.

5. Plan for containment to prevent spread of the disease if symptoms are detected

We will have quarantine space available at each location in the event a program participant or staff member reports symptoms of a respiratory illness.

The guidelines are a resource for all day program participants, families, caregivers, providers, and staff. Much of the safety policies was crafted in coordination with guidelines from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention.



A Phased Approach: Minimum Capacity

We are introducing new program procedures that are rooted in our overall capacity. On August 10, we will be at **minimum capacity** which means that:

- **only mission-critical clinical and program staff will be on site;**
- **only Omni Way and Parker Street facilities will be open for day programs;**
- **overall building capacity will be limited to 50%;**
- **employment and community programs remain suspended; and**
- **no transportation will be provided.**

“The programs you are returning to will look far different than the programs you left”

--Chris Snell, Director of Clinical Services



Incompass facilities are operating at minimum capacity to allow for social distancing, and all staff are required to wear a face mask.



Returning to Programs

Prior to Return: What You Need to Know

We cannot wait to see you again, but given the heightened environment there are numerous infection control procedures that are now in place. We want your program experience to be fun and engaging, but it is safe to say things will look different.

We are focusing on cleaning and disinfecting spaces, restricting building access and room crossovers, practicing social distancing, wearing face masks, and implementing temperature and wellness checks for every person who enters the facility.



What does that mean for you? Don't worry! Check out the enclosed info and remember, we will be with you every step of the way...

COVID-19 Acknowledgement of Risk



The acknowledgement of risk form must be signed by each identified returning participant/caregiver/guardian, acknowledging that they are informed, educated, and aware of the individualized identified risks that are inherent to attending a congregate, site-based day program.

Building Access, Improvements, and Signage



Access to facilities and program rooms will be restricted in compliance with reduced capacity mandates. All individuals, staff, visitors, and vendors who are granted entry will be required to sign in and pass a temperature and wellness check.

- **Only the main entrance to Parker Street and Omni Way will be accessible to non-program participants**
- **Hand sanitizer stations have been installed at building entrances and throughout program areas**
- **Contact tracing logs will be actively managed in the reception areas of Parker Street and Omni Way**
- **Social distancing markers will be prevalent at building entrances and throughout program space**
- **Signage will be in place to remind all participants of social distancing protocols, face coverings, and symptom checks**



Program Participant and Staff Screening Criteria



All program participants and Incompass staff will be subject to daily temperature and wellness checks prior to entering the facility.

- **Do you have a fever greater than 100.0 degrees?**
- **Are you experiencing symptoms of a respiratory illness, including COVID-19?**
- **Have you been in contact with anyone with symptoms in the past 24 hours?**

Cleaning and Disinfecting



On top of our already rigorous cleaning and disinfecting procedures, we put a renewed focus on this aspect of our program facilities. A professional cleaning company is employed by the agency daily from 9AM-3PM at each day program site, and they will conduct a “deep cleaning” of each site after program hours.

- **Facility cleaning will focus on high touch surfaces including knobs, appliances, railings, and tabletop surfaces**
- **Electrostatic disinfecting will be performed daily at all active program facilities**
- **Every program room, bathroom, and common area has been provided EPA-registered disinfectants and sanitizers for use against COVID-19**

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)



Incompass has made a significant investment in PPE, both for staff and individuals in our programs. All staff in a program facility will be required to wear a face covering as a condition of entering the premises, and we will strongly encourage program participants who are able to do so to wear a mask.

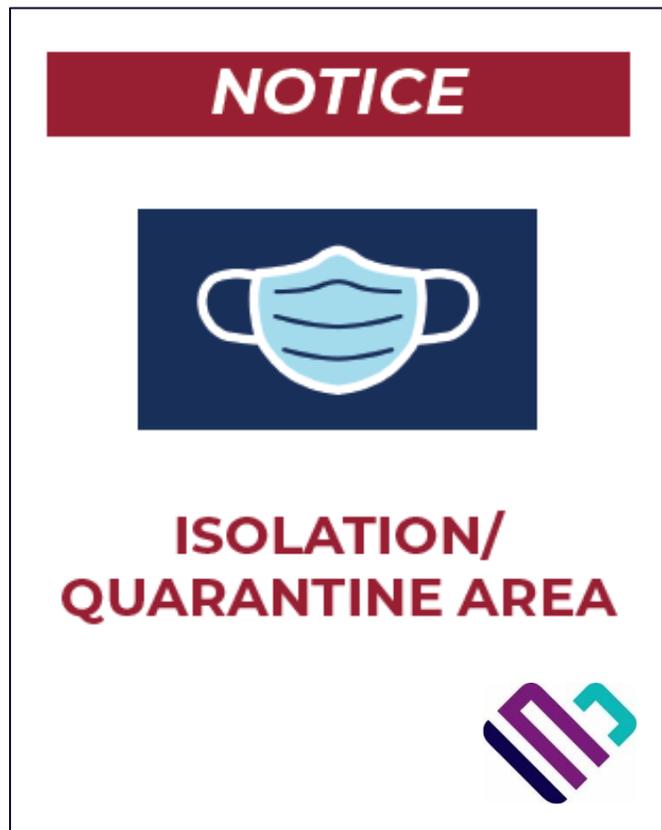
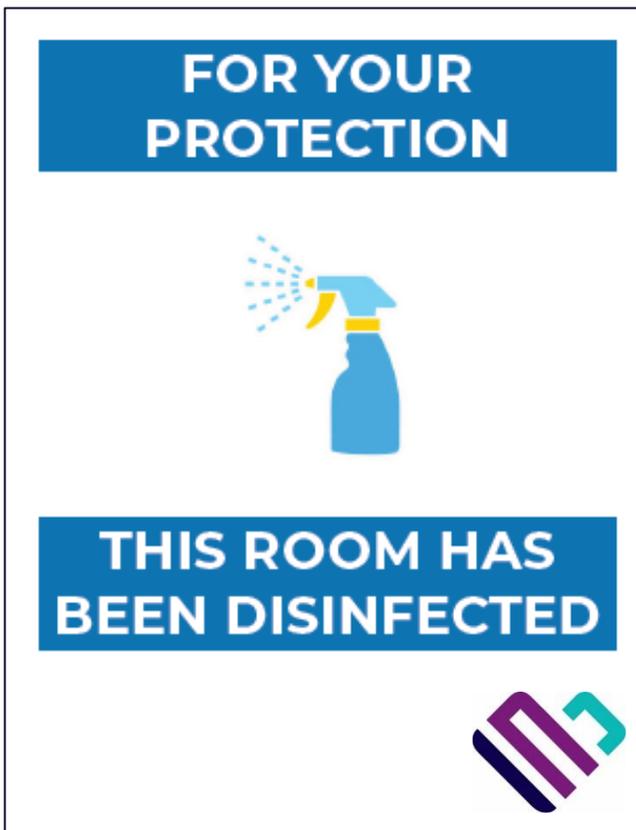
- **Staff are provided with an FDA-approved medical protective mask to wear in the program and are required to wear it on shift**
- **No masks brought in from outside the building are permitted in program areas of the building**
- **Where hands on, physical care or interventions are required with a participant, the engaged staff will wear eye protection, a mask, and gloves for the duration of the event**



Staff Training and Certification



All staff have completed EOHHS agency-mandated trainings on all aspects of prevention control and containment including social distancing in a congregate care environment, cleaning and disinfecting procedures, hand hygiene, signs and symptoms of COVID-19, face covering, and low touch expectations. Staff working in program spaces are required to sign an attestation of training completion of each of these sessions prior to the resumption of day programs.



New signage will be visible at our program facilities starting on August 10!



Day Program Experience

Program Protocols Under Minimum Capacity Restrictions

We've already told you that the programs you are returning to will look far different than the programs you left. We are in this together, and our direct care staff and case coordinators will make sure you are comfortable with the new environment that your loved ones will be entering.

While the programs will change, we would not open programs unless we can offer them in fun and engaging ways that are individualized to each participant. You will notice colorful spaces, new signage, and a new process for drop-off. Oh – and you will see pool noodles!



Take a look at what you need to know about the day program experience under the minimum capacity guidelines...

Program Hours and Dropoff



New hours (for some of you), no transportation services, and new drop-off and pick-up procedures await individuals and caregivers upon the resumption day services. When dropping off, a queue will be established outside of the program entrance to allow for screening. All caregivers responsible for an individual's transportation will be asked to wait until the person has been cleared to enter, as well as confirm the phone number that they can be reached at during program hours. At the end of the day, the same queue will be established as staff announce the arrival of your ride.

- **Omni Way and Parker Street Day Program Hours: 8:15AM – 2:15PM**
- **Drop-off and pick-up will be at the designated program entrance**
- **The screening will be conducted at the vehicle by a direct care staff member from a safe distance**
- **Drivers must stay in the car and wear a mask**
- **Visitors are restricted in the program space**



Temperature and Wellness Checks



We've successfully implemented temperature and wellness checks across all of our group homes over the past few months and will continue this practice in our facility-based programming. A program staff will meet each participant at their vehicle and screen for the following symptoms before escorting them into their program room:

- **Temperature over 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit**
- **Daily health attestation form**

Symptoms we will screen for as part of the wellness checks include the person served and anyone who they may have been exposed to who have exhibited the following within the past 24 hours:

- **Fever/Chills**
- **Cough**
- **Sore throat**
- **Difficulty breathing**
- **Abdominal pain**
- **Nausea/vomiting**
- **Diarrhea**

Any person arriving at the building with symptoms will be required to leave the program with recommendations to follow up with their primary care physician.

Additional screening when necessary will include:

- **Positive test and date?**
- **Awaiting test results?**
- **Close contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 in past 14 days?**



Social Distancing: Stay a Noodle Apart!



While we love high fives, pats on the back, and hugs; we will promote a “low-touch culture” and avoid unnecessary physical contact. The driver for reductions in capacity and reduced physical contact is our ability to practice social distancing and stay six feet apart, in accordance with the CDC guidelines. You will see signage in our program areas but remember – our commitment is to keep our programs engaging and fun.

- **Program rooms have reduced occupancy to allow for six feet of physical distance**
- **Participants are encouraged to avoid immediate contact (such as shaking or holding hands, hugging, or kissing), as well as by mediated contact**

Our Care Champions are using pool noodles in program rooms to demonstrate the six-foot social distancing guideline and turn the exercise into something fun! We encourage you to purchase pool noodles to help with the transition to program resumption.

Program Space



You will notice a few changes to the spaces themselves, beyond the building signage and presence of hand sanitizer stations. Staff will support you when moving through the building to establish flow and promote social distancing. All staff will be wearing medical face masks throughout the building and everyone else who can tolerate a face covering will be encouraged to follow suit. Program rooms will have limited capacity with only a small number of people be allowed in each room. As such, the setup of the program rooms looks different, with furniture setup to promote social distancing. You will also notice a lot of extra cleaning happening throughout the day with all doorknobs, railings, light switches, and other high touch areas being sanitized on an ongoing basis.

- **Direct care staff will accompany program participants when moving through the building to support flow and physical distancing**
- **Ample segregated space will be provided for storage of personal belongings to limit cross contact**
- **Dining utensils will be returned uncleaned to limit cross contact**
- **Groups will be arranged based upon social circles and service needs**
- **Crossover between program rooms by staff will be extremely limited**



Day Program Procedures



When we say programs will be different, we are not just talking about program space and cleaning procedures. Many routine aspects of the program experience are being updated as part of our infection prevention plan. Everything from bathroom trips to food preparation are under heightened scrutiny.

- **All external food deliveries are suspended on-site**
- **Lunches and snacks must require minimal prep and can be stored and eaten in your designated program space**
- **Participants will place their lunch box with icepack into their specific, identified storage area *OR* in an agency-provided container to be placed into the fridge**
- **Individuals will sit six feet apart and face the same direction for mealtime, and a “horseshoe” design will be employed when space and resources allow for it**
- **Bathrooms are limited to individual use and are assigned by cohort so they can be immediately cleaned after use**

Medication Drop-Off and Procedures



Because all visitation to program rooms under minimum capacity guidelines will be extremely limited, new procedures around medication administration are necessary. We are asking for your cooperation to ensure our individuals continue to receive the high-quality care they deserve under these restrictions. A core tenet of the new plan is ensuring that the medication chain of custody is not broken while restricting visitors inside the building.

- **Nursing contacts will confirm medication drop off times by email with residential providers/caregivers**
- **Medication drop boxes will be available at the front entrance of each site building**



Infection Containment

Preparing to Respond in the Event of Infection

While we are taking every step to prevent a COVID-19 infection among our individuals served and staff, we must be prepared to respond in the event of infection. Many of our infection control procedures will be utilized for containment, but we need your cooperation to minimize risk.



We need your cooperation to minimize risk!

Isolation and Discharge



Any program participants or staff exhibiting symptoms will be sent home immediately with a recommendation to contact their Primary Care Physician as soon as possible. For those who cannot immediately return home, each site has comfortable locations to provide for isolation along with designated isolation bathrooms. When occupied, any staff providing supports will don enhanced PPE and be under the direct oversight of the onsite nurse.

What happens when symptoms at program are identified?

- **A staff member will notify nursing and the individual will be brought to the isolation area for a more comprehensive nursing assessment**
- **The individual will remain in an identified isolation room in the program and remain there until transportation arrives**
- **Program participants will be moved to another space while the primary program room is cleaned and disinfected**
- **Program common areas will be cleared while the ill participants exit the building and the path of their exit will be immediately sanitized before any program traffic resumes access to that area**



Contact Tracing and Communication



Every visitor to the Incompass facilities will not only be subject to the temperature and wellness screening at reception but will also be required to leave their name and contact information at the reception desk as part of our contact tracing program. In the event a positive COVID-19 test is confirmed, we will notify everyone on the contact tracing log of a possible exposure to reduce the spread of the disease.

When a day program is made aware of a participant or staff person that has tested positive for COVID-19, the Director of the affected program, Assistant Clinical Director of Nursing, and/or other identified agency designee(s) will contact the town Board of Health that the program resides in to determine if there are any town specific actions steps required of the agency. The agency will also report the result to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and/or MassHealth as appropriate.

As a reminder, we will follow and adhere to HIPAA guidelines and never compromise the confidentiality of the people we serve or our staff.

Final Thoughts

Before We See You Again!

Even under the minimum capacity restrictions, our programming will be engaging and purposeful, designed to meet the social and service needs of each person in the safest manner possible. While a lot will look different, the same high-quality staff will be thoroughly trained and ready to welcome you back!

If these changes seem overwhelming, not to worry! We will be there every step of the way to guide you through the resumption process. A staff person will orient you to everything you can expect on your first day back and there will be a staff person designated to monitor the standards and expectations to give immediate feedback, support, and training to ensure the standards are upheld for everyone's safety.



And remember, we are in this together and we do this #ForEachOther!





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For more information visit
www.lifelinksclass.org/resumption

