



WATAUGA

OPPORTUNITIES, INC.

ENABLING SELF-RELIANCE THROUGH EMPLOYMENT

MEMO: Participants, Parents, Caregivers
FROM: Michael Maybee
DATE: April 30, 2020
RE: **Watauga & Ashe Opportunities – Continued Facility Services Pause due to COVID-19**

I hope this finds all of you and your family safe and well.

Due to the Governors' continuation of the NC shelter in place order, the confirmation of COVID 19 diagnosis's in Watauga, Ashe, and surrounding Counties, the potential further spread of this virus, and the very **vital need, at our Watauga facility, to safely continue our essential manufacturing of face shields and sample collection vials used in COVID 19 test kits**, we must continue to pause the delivery of facility based services at both our WOI manufacturing facility in Boone and our Family Central location in Jefferson. We will re-evaluate the continued need for this facility service pause as NC begins the process of gradually reopening over three phases as announced by the governor.

- As the three phases of gradual reopening are currently described by the Governors' office (but could be altered based on new data), **reopening of our facility based services appears to be included in phase II** of the reopening plan. If all virus occurrence data are as expected phase I will begin next Friday May 8. Then if all virus data are as expected **Phase II could occur 2-3 weeks after phase I, which would be May 25 or June 1.**
- **We will keep you informed as this reopening process proceeds. We look forward to everyone's return!**
- Per the Governors order our IDD services through VAYA and NC Vocational Rehabilitation **are designated Essential Service** as such we have developed various virtual service options from simple phone contact to virtual meeting options individually and in groups. Our twice a day Zoom meetings and phone contacts have proven very popular **If you currently are not but would like to join our Zoom meetings or phone calls, please contact your program Director, Melissa at Boone or Joye at Ashe and they can get you started.** They will also keep you informed on our eventual reopening of services at both Boone and Ashe locations.
- During this service pause, as you know, **we continue to pay any participant who worked at WOI or AO their average amount earned every two weeks.** The second of these checks is enclosed with this memo.

I encourage you and your family to continue taking all the proper precautions while home including:

- **Please limit Visitors** during this pandemic, **no hand-touch greetings**, encourage other greetings.
- Anyone with fever of **100** or higher a sustained cough or sore throat should seek immediate medical attention.
- PLEASE follow **strict physical distancing guidelines**, no closer than 6 feet!!!
- Encouraging everyone **to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth.**
- Appropriate **hand washing and sanitizing throughout the day.**
- Encourage all to **cover cough or sneeze** with a tissue, then throw the tissue away (**Do not cough into hand**).
- **No non-essential trips** to locations **other than outdoor areas for walks** etc. per the Governors order.

Lastly I'd like to remind you much valuable and **accurate** information on COVID-19 is also available at ncdhhs.gov/covid19. Due to inaccuracies, I highly recommend you avoid social media for information regarding this situation. We will **continue to monitor the situation daily** and will keep you informed as our reopening evolves.

Stay safe and stay well!!

P.O. Box 2330 • 642 Greenway Road • Boone, North Carolina 28607 Telephone: (828) 264-5009 • Fax (828) 264-5006 •

www.woiworks.org