



MEMO: Participants, Parents, Caregivers  
FROM: Michael Maybee  
DATE: June 11, 2020  
RE: **Watauga & Ashe Opportunities – Beginning plans for reopening Facility Services due to COVID**

I hope this finds all of you and your family continuing to be safe and well, we certainly miss all of you!

Watauga Opportunities is in the process of **developing a reopening plan for facility-based services**. However, in light of this week's increases in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, we need to delay reopening a little bit further than we had hoped. **Once our NC virus indicators allow** such, we plan to reopen facility services with many new safeguards and procedures. We want your input regarding your interest in potential re-start dates for facility-based services. Staff are currently reaching out to all of you regarding your interest in different dates for restarting facility services, **currently we are exploring 6/29 or 7/6**.

- Keeping in mind the three W's; WAIT, WASH, & WEAR, we are currently preparing our buildings for reopening through the following measures, posting numerous appropriate signage, developing and marking traffic flow patterns, developing and marking seating patterns, all to assure social distancing. We have tripled cleaning staff with sanitizing occurring continuously throughout the day including all touch surfaces. All staff are required to wear face masks and as appropriate face shields. Participants will be encouraged to do the same as tolerable. All staff are screened for temperature, symptoms and exposure potential daily. When participants return, they will be screened for symptoms, including temperature with no touch thermometers, and exposure. Staff will assist participants with hygiene, and social distancing as they arrive, depart, and throughout the day.
- **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 **continue as designated Essential Service**. As you know we have developed various virtual service options from phone contact to virtual meeting options individually and in groups. Our twice a day Zoom meetings and phone contacts continue to prove 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 of reopening plans for both our 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 5th 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 again remind you much valuable and **accurate** information on COVID-19 is also available at [ncdhhs.gov/covid19](http://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!!