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RE: COVID Impacts on service delivery update

Dear Individuals/Family/Guardians and Friends:

On behalf of our Leadership Team and staff, I want to update you on how we are currently operating during this new phase of the pandemic. As we have seen cases statewide and here in our local area decrease, we have determined our current COVID-19 risk to be low. Effective in May we moved to a mask-optional facility and will continue to monitor the weekly updates from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services regarding COVID-19 and influenza cases. Please be advised this decision is subject to change depending on COVID-19 cases and federal or state guidelines. We ask that if you are not feeling well or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please stay home, focus on getting better, and follow the CDC guidelines.

The pandemic has continued to impact our industry and you may have also heard and/or noticed that we have both a national, statewide and local workforce shortage across many industries like social services. This, too, has impacted our ability to offer the robust services to which you are accustomed. Please note this is not just an Arc issue; it is an issue for all community providers. We continue to advertise in various virtual and non-virtual places, offer a referral bonus for staff, and a signing bonus for frontline staff.

I am sharing all of this with you as an update and to offer you additional insight and understanding in hopes that you feel driven to help with advocacy efforts for yourself and/or your loved ones. Ric Nelson, myself, and other key staff have been advocating on several issues such as the Better Cares Better Jobs Act, COVID Impacts on our Industry, and the workforce shortage.

If you are interested in joining our advocacy efforts to help keep appropriate pressure on our legislatures to keep our provider communities at the forefront of their decision making you can do so in a few ways:

1. Contact Ric Nelson, Advocacy & Outreach Manager 907-777-0195 or rnelson@thearcofanchorage.org
2. Contact your local Representative at www.akleg.gov
3. Contact your local Senator at www.akleg.gov
4. Contact our US Senators Lisa Murkowski at www.murkowski.senate.gov and Dan Sullivan at www.sullivan.senate.gov

Thank you for choosing The Arc of Anchorage to provide services for you and for your ongoing patience and support during this unprecedented time. If you have further questions, concerns or compliments, please contact your Case Manager, Team Leader or Program Directors as may apply. We wish you continued good health and safety during this pandemic period.

Genuinely,



Barbara Rath,MSW
Chief Executive Officer
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For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities