

## COVID-19 Update

April 6, 2020

### North Metro Community Services

At this point it's hard to celebrate anything about the COVID Pandemic but then I realized its April 6 so we made it through March, one more small hurdle cleared. However another hurdle looms on the horizon, the month of April, which by most accounts will be more difficult and deadly than March.

North Metro is officially extending its closure through the month of April. The earliest we could return to normal operations is May 4 though I doubt that will happen. As I'm sure most of you are aware the school districts in the metro area will not be resuming in-person classes this spring. There is a good chance we will extend our closure into May but given how rapidly things continue to change I don't want to get too far ahead of myself by announcing anything beyond April at this point.

You have also probably heard the Governor's directive that all of us should wear masks when we are outside of our homes to complete essential tasks like grocery shopping or to get some exercise. I am not going to go into how to make masks or how to handle them, that has been covered in depth in dozens of places including You Tube. One key with homemade masks is that when you have them on you should be unable to blow out a candle or a match through the mask. If you can you need either more layers of material or you can add a coffee filter inside the mask.

The important thing is that we start following this directive. This is no joke and it is not optional. If you've read about this you know that the mask doesn't truly protect you against the virus but what it does do is help keep you from unknowingly spreading it to others and it helps keep others from unknowingly spreading it to you; my mask protects you and your mask protects me. This is just one more small step you can take to help protect our community so why wouldn't we do it? What possible justification could anyone have for not doing everything they can to prevent the spread of the virus and thereby save lives? **Consequently starting on 3/7 if you're going out in public on NMCS business or coming to one of our facilities you must wear a mask.** Of course I can't tell you what to do on your own time but I would certainly encourage you to use a mask when you got out. I wish I was in a position to provide masks to everyone but I'm not, however if I can make my own (and I have though if you see me today I'm wearing a dust mask) I'm pretty confident that anyone can do it!

We had a situation at the Greenbriar Apartment complex where people in services and staff were potentially exposed to COVID 19. At this point it has been 2 weeks since the potential staff exposure and no one is exhibiting symptoms. People in services were potentially exposed a little over a week ago and none of them are exhibiting symptoms either though they will remain isolated for another week. This situation drives home the importance of staying away from work if you have symptoms, even if they are mild.

Last week's distribution of payroll went well; we only ended up mailing out 3 checks between staff and host home providers. Mileage checks will be mailed to you so be sure that your mailing address in Paycom is up to date since that is the mailing address we will use.

I apologize if this update is a little harsh but we are heading into "crunch time" in April. The steps you are taking today in terms of social distancing, hand washing and masks are going to be paying dividends in the weeks to come. If you are doing everything you can to contain the virus that will pay positive dividends but if you are not that will be paying negative dividends. We support a highly vulnerable group of people who stand to be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 but we all also have friends and family who are risk. When this is over I want to say I did my part and I think you will want to be able to say that as well.

Keep up the good work, stay close to home and stay healthy until next week.

Randy Brodersen  
Executive Director, NMCS