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For Our Clients: A COVID-19 Update

On March 11, the Governor issued an executive order with the intention of protecting New Mexicans from the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The protection of our clients and staff is vital. Like most services, Self-Directed Choices is changing how we operate by completing your quarterly and monthly reports on the telephone instead of face-to-face at your home for the time being. By practicing social distancing, we hope to do our part to find you safe and healthy when we see you next time.

Your Support Broker/Consultant will be contacting you this week (or has already talked with you) to confirm or update that you are safe and have an effective backup plan in place, as well as to make sure we have your updated contact information. Contact information includes your phone number(s) and your address. We also need to make sure we have the current contact information for your relatives and/or caregivers.

In the meantime, you might have a few questions about your self-directed services we thought we could try to answer for you.

What is COVID-19? Here is a [link to information about this virus](#), and these booklets are available in English and Spanish. There is no treatment or cure, so it's important to try to avoid getting infected. The New Mexico Department of Health provides the following advice for COVID-19 prevention:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Take everyday preventive actions.
- Clean your hands often.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, or having been in a public place.
- If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- To the extent possible, avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places – elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, handshaking with people, etc. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something.
- Wash your hands after touching surfaces in public places.
- Avoid touching your face, nose, eyes, etc.
- Clean and disinfect your home to remove germs: practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks & cell phones).

- Avoid crowds, especially in poorly ventilated spaces. Your risk of exposure to respiratory viruses like COVID-19 may increase in crowded, closed-in settings with little air circulation if there are people in the crowd who are sick.

What if my caregiver has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19? They should not come to work and you should work with your support broker to have one or even more backup options for each of your caregiving needs at this time.

What if I think I might have COVID-19? Please contact your medical provider immediately and inform your caregivers right away so you can get tested. You can also call the New Mexico COVID-19 Hotline at 1-855-600-6453. Being in a vulnerable population, it's important to attempt to prevent acquiring this diagnosis. If it is unavoidable, the backup plan you develop with your support broker and care providers will be more important for you to put into action than ever. You will need to protect both yourself and others around you by staying socially distant from others.

Do I still need to do my monthly and quarterly reports for self-direction? Yes, Self-Directed Choices is up and running. We are simply operating over the telephone and remotely for the time being. Please contact us with your concerns and questions at 505-508-1663.

What about my budget and paperwork? We have not been informed of changes to the budget process. Conduent has had some process changes to their walk-in lobby assistance service as of March 23, 2020. You may call them in advance to drop off paperwork at the door, fax it to them, or mail it to them. You can contact Conduent at 1-866-916-0310.

I can't get the things I need to survive because of shortages. Who can help me? We are updating our [Facebook page](#) with resources as we discover them and as more people are stepping up to help. Please check our Facebook page to find new resources. Here are a couple resources for you, too.

- For senior and disabled adults in need of groceries, call 1-800-432-2080.
- United Way Community Economic Relief Fund is 1-866-211-9966.
- The Sherriff's Community Action Team is at 505-331-9378.

From all of us at Self-Directed Choices, we wish you and your family good health.

Sincerely,

Sandy Skaar

Sandy Skaar, MSW
Executive Director