



COVID-19 Safety Measures for Employees

Effective 1/6/2022 - revisions are highlighted

Community Habilitation (Self-Hired and Agency Supported), Self-Hired Respite, Companion Care,
Broker and Fiscal Intermediary Services

The guidance below is in accordance with a combination of the most recent federal government, Department of Labor, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Department of Health (DOH) and Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) guidance as of 1/5/2022.

COVID-19 Vaccination for Employees effective 10/1/21

Please see Advocates' Employee Vaccination Policy: <http://www.advocatesincorporated.org/information-resources/>

Health Screenings

All employees must complete a health screening prior to entering any work location (including the home of person served, Advocates office, etc.).

- Mentors must complete health screening upon logging into eVero prior to beginning a direct shift.
- **Advocates' offices:** All guests and employees must complete a health screening **online** prior to entering office. [Click here for screening form.](#)
- **Physical office access is available by appointment only through 2/1/22. To make an appointment, please email TSS@advocatesincorporated.org.**
- **Advocates' Fayetteville Community space is temporarily unavailable for sign out through 2/1/22.**

Masks / Face Coverings for Employees

- Employees are provided with medical disposable masks and additional PPE upon request.
- Email supplies@advocatesincorporated.org to request PPE.
- PPE will be mailed to employees or within 1 business day of request, or can be picked up by appointment upon request.

	Guidance on Masks/ Face Coverings
Indoors	<p>Regardless of vaccination status, employees are required to wear a mask in all indoor locations while providing services.</p> <p>Regardless of vaccination status, employees should encourage individuals receiving services to wear a mask in indoor public places if they are able to medically tolerate wearing a mask.</p>
Within the home of individuals receiving services	<p>Regardless of vaccination status, employees are required to wear a mask in all indoor locations while providing services, including when working within the individual’s private home.</p>
Outdoors	<p>Regardless of vaccination status, employees are not required to wear a mask in outdoor settings while providing services, with the following exceptions:</p> <p>Employees must wear a mask outdoors when providing services within 6 feet of an individual who has a medical condition that makes them more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19* if the individual receiving services is not fully vaccinated.</p> <p>* Per CDC, medical conditions that make people more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 include: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html</p>

Regardless of vaccination status:

- If local government/county mandates become more restrictive than Advocates guidance, all employees must defer to their local government/county mandates.

- If the community setting or private home requires a mask for entry, all employees are required to follow the mask policy of the location that they are in while providing services. Employees should encourage individuals receiving services to do the same if they are able to medically tolerate wearing a mask.
- Per CDC, “If you have a condition or are taking medications that weaken your immune system, you may need to keep taking steps to protect yourself, like wearing a mask, even if you are fully vaccinated. Talk to your healthcare provider about steps you can take to manage your health and risks”. **Employees should defer to any medical advice given to the individual receiving services/family to determine if the employee should encourage an individual receiving services who is fully vaccinated to continue to wear a mask or not.**
- In general, employees should encourage **individuals receiving services who are not fully vaccinated** to wear a mask in outdoor settings within 6 feet of others if they have a medical condition that makes them more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19* if they are able to medically tolerate wearing a mask, unless the individual has received other medical advice.

* Per CDC, medical conditions that make people more likely to get severely ill from COVID-19 include:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>

Guidance on Community & Group Activities During Services

- Employees should encourage individuals receiving services to practice social distancing in public places.
- Low risk, well ventilated or outdoor activities are encouraged whenever possible.
- All community activities must allow for social distancing.
- If the person being supported chooses to gather with friends, Mentor is responsible for ensuring that social distancing is practiced at all times.

Additional Guidance During Times of High COVID-19 Community Transmission

[Click here for link to view level of community transmission](#)

- Advocates strongly recommends that services are provided 1:1 during times of high COVID-19 community transmission.
- Gathering in groups is strongly discouraged. This applies to those who are fully vaccinated and those who are not vaccinated.

Transportation During Services

Regardless of vaccination status:

- Prior to providing services vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected.
- Per CDC and DOH: **Wearing a mask over your nose and mouth is required** on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and while indoors at U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations. Travelers are not required to wear a mask in outdoor areas of a conveyance (like on open deck areas of a ferry or the uncovered top deck of a bus). Follow all state and local recommendations and requirements, including mask wearing and social distancing.

Please note: The CDC recommends that you delay travel until you are fully vaccinated.

Guidance on Providing Services Within a Mentor's Home

To safeguard the people we support, our employees and those residing in the employee's home, services may not be provided at a Mentor's home. **This is an ongoing policy that will remain in effect beyond the COVID-19 public health emergency.**

NY State Travel Advisory - <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>

As of June 25, 2021, the New York State Travel Advisory is no longer in effect. As such, travelers arriving in New York are no longer required to submit traveler health forms. All domestic and international travelers should continue to follow all CDC travel requirements.

Advocates' Instructions to Employees on Working Out of State

- **Prior to providing services out of state, employees must email hr@advocatesincorporated.org to request permission to work out of state.** OPWDD requires that the individual have a statement in their Life Plan regarding their desire to use their services out of state before their Mentor can provide services out of state.
- Employees may not work out of state for more than 10 consecutive days quarterly.

Reminder: Advocates' Employees must immediately notify Advocates' COVID Hotline if they have a direct exposure (directly exposed to someone who has tested positive within the last 10 days) or if the employee is pending a COVID test result.

Contact information:

Advocates' COVID Hotline / Incident reporting cell: (315) 401-1293

Human Resources email HR@advocatesincorporated.org

Training and Support Specialists: (315) 469-9931 or email TSS@advocatesincorporated.org

<http://www.advocatesincorporated.org/information-resources/>