

COVID-19

March 25, 2020

First and foremost, I would like to thank all of you for your dedication and commitment to continue to provide service in the face of extremely difficult and challenging times.

Here is what is happening.

We have closed offices in the majority of our locations and have greatly reduced the number of people working in our remaining offices.

We are having discussions with people and, where possible, encouraging everyone who can work from home to do so.

We are compiling a list of individuals that will very likely require continued support during these times. They include individuals who:

1. Have complex medical needs as defined by a care plan, Delegation of Task and / or a medical protocol such as a feeding regime.
2. Have complex behavior care needs as defined by a behavior and / or safety plan.
This group would also include individuals with complex mental health concerns.
3. Have significant support needs other than those identified above.

PROGRAMS

CLBC and Public Health have requested that we keep as many programs open as is safe to do so with our precautions in place.

We have had many questions about the operation of our programs and we will attempt to answer them here. Much of the information below is from a March 24, 2020 Info Bulletin from CLBC.

Community Inclusion Support: We recognize that for a vast majority of supported individuals, the safest place is at home. We know that there are many families and home share providers that have agreed to support individuals from home until the crisis has

passed. This is greatly appreciated and very helpful. This is why we are looking at ways to support individuals from their home during this troubling time.

Please remember the grouping and congregation of individuals puts everyone at increased risk. It is the direction of the Public Health Officer to not congregate in groups. We have been directed by CLBC to not support individuals in groups of more than five.

Staffed Residential Support: We know that families are worried about their loved ones living in a group home and that they want to know what is being done to reduce the risk of exposure. We are canvassing families to determine if they have the capacity to take their loved one home. We also know that in the vast majority of cases, that this will be quite unlikely.

All visitors should be restricted and only essential visitors should be allowed access. We do encourage virtual visits through Face time or Skype.

If an individual becomes symptomatic, we will need to close the home to all visitors and quarantine the other individuals in the home.

Home Share Support: Many home share providers are wisely keeping the individual at home. We encourage this whenever possible but also understand that it can become very taxing. We will likely be redeploying some staff members to provide support to home share providers.

STAFFING IN A TIME OF CRISIS

We have been seeking and have now received clarification on a number of issues.

1. Staff members, particularly community workers, whose hours are reduced due to individuals not wanting support at this time will continue to receive their pay if willing to work in a capacity that is required. This may mean meeting an individual outside of their home for a walk in the community, it may mean redeployment to a group home that needs support.
Staff members unwilling to work can use their vacation accruals or take an unpaid leave of absence. This must be communicated to your manager.
2. If a staff member is symptomatic there must be a determination by either 8-1-1, a physician or a health authority. Please get the name of the operator, the date of your call and their recommendations. You will be required to provide this information to your manager. You can use your accrued sick leave and then apply for EI.
3. If you are not symptomatic, but have travelled outside of Canada before March 13th, then you will be placed on a paid leave of absence for a 14-day quarantine

period. If you become sick during your isolation, you are required utilize sick pay at that time. During this time, you are also required to keep TCS informed of your plans during this time.

4. If you are not symptomatic, but are concerned about having contracted the virus the determination to quarantine must be made by 8-1-1, your physician or a health authority. Please obtain the name of the operator, the date of your call and their recommendations. You will be required to provide this information to your manager. If the recommendation is to quarantine, then you will be placed on a paid leave of absence for the quarantine period. Again, you are expected to keep TCS informed of your symptoms during this time. If you become sick during your isolation, you are required to let us know and you will be switched to sick pay.
5. If you are not symptomatic but are concerned that you may transmit the virus to a family member sick or need to care for others in your home, then you can take your vacation leave or an unpaid leave of absence.
6. If you are not symptomatic and have travelled outside of Canada after March 13th, 2020, you can take your vacation leave or unpaid leave of absence for the 14-day quarantine period.

NOTE: If you believe that a mistake has been made, please first contact you Area Manager or Director prior to contacting Payroll. Your Area Manager or Director will advise you on how to proceed. These are very busy times and Wendy will not be able to respond to phone calls. Email Wendy at wlowrey@tcsinfo.ca. She will respond as soon as she is able to.

REMEMBER to wash your hands frequently, cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm, clean surfaces and to maintain a two meter physical distance from others.

I thank you for all that you do and please stay safe.

Bob Cornish, CEO