



# Department of Health

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**DATE:** March 25, 2021  
**TO:** Medical Model Adult Day Health Care Programs  
**FROM:** New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH)

## Health Advisory: Reopening Guidance for Medical Model Adult Day Health Care Program

**Please distribute immediately to:**  
Administrators, Infection Preventionists, Medical Directors,  
Adult Day Health Care Program Directors

Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) programs provide a wide range of services to a large number of individuals with multiple chronic conditions who otherwise would require nursing home admission. Pursuant to Executive Order 202.5 as extended, which prevented transportation to and attendance at adult day care programs until authorized by the Commissioner of Health, this guidance authorizes the thoughtful and safe resumption of ADHC services to programs interested in reopening.

ADHC programs considering reopening will be expected to follow strict standards for infection control for staff and registrants. In order to evaluate effectiveness of infection control standards and practices, the Department will use a phased approach to reopening. The phased reopening approach will provide the necessary time for ADHC programs to train staff, obtain authorizations from managed care or community physician for such services, and communicate to registrants and families, vendors, and transportation providers. The phases of reopening are as follows:

**Phase #1: Approved** Off-site ADHC programs located in all areas across the state can open beginning April 1, 2021. a. Off-site ADHC programs can submit the required reopening plan described below to the Department for review starting March 17, 2021.

**Phase #2: Approved** ADHC programs co-located on the grounds or immediately adjacent to the sponsoring nursing home where there are no active COVID-19 cases associated with the co-located nursing home, **and** the nursing home meets the eligibility criteria for visitation open beginning April 15, 2021. Co-located ADHC programs can submit the required reopening plan described below to the Department for review starting March 15, 2021.

The April effective dates will provide the ADHC programs the necessary time to prepare the site, outreach registrants and take the necessary steps to implement and educate staff, families and registrants on safe reopening guidelines.

Prior to reopening, each ADHC program must submit a NY Forward Safety Plan to the Department via email to [covidnursinghomeinfo@health.ny.gov](mailto:covidnursinghomeinfo@health.ny.gov) that specifically addresses the following three key areas of operation including:

### 1. Physical distancing in the ADHC

To open, each plan submitted by the ADHC program must contain policies and procedures that ensure:

- That all activities adhere to the 6 ft. social distancing requirements between staff and registrants, unless otherwise required for safety or core function activity;
- That all tables and chairs be arranged to allow for seating 6 ft. apart for meals and group activities;
- That ADHC registrants not engage in communal dining with nursing home residents until further notice;
- That ADHC registrants do not engage in activities with nursing home residents until further notice; and
- That all registrants be socially distanced 6 ft. apart and wear a face mask or face covering as medically tolerated and no ADHC visitors be permitted until further notice.

## **2. Infection control, including screening of registrants, staff, and visitors**

ADHC providers will follow program-specific infection control policies and follow Executive Orders and DOH guidance on staff testing, registrant screening, and visitor policy until further notice. ADHC providers co-located on the grounds or immediately adjacent to the sponsoring nursing home are considered staff for the purposes of staff testing pursuant to Executive Order 202.88 as modified and extended, as well as associated directives from the Department. In addition to these policies, to open, each ADHC program will ensure:

- Proper supply of PPE for staff and registrants is onsite;
- Program follows DOH and CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfection of all hard surfaces;
- All registrants except those who have recently recovered as detailed below must have proof of a negative baseline COVID-19 test performed no more than three (3) days prior to attending the registrant's first session. PCR or antigen testing is acceptable. Results of that testing shall be available and maintained on file with the ADHC program;
- All registrants who had a positive COVID-19 diagnostic test within the three months before the first session must have met either the criteria for discontinuation of home isolation or discontinuation of transmission-based precautions, as appropriate and based on those criteria in force at the time. Such registrants who have fully recovered from COVID-19 within the previous three months should not be required to test prior to attending and if exposed to COVID-19 and asymptomatic do not need to quarantine, consistent with DOH and CDC guidance on quarantine.
- Prior to the initiation of services, each willing ADHC registrant eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine must be assisted in obtaining such vaccination and a record of vaccination will be maintained onsite at the program site and made available upon the Department's request. Vaccine declinations must be tracked by and maintained on file with the ADHC program.
- Each registrant and staff member is screened upon arrival to the program in an area separate from the program space in accordance with DOH and CDC guidelines;
- Staff follow DOH and CMS guidance on proper use of PPE when caring for registrants and follow the core principles of infection control and prevention;
- All registrants are free from communicable disease upon return to program;
- All staff wear a mask during operating hours;

- The ADHC program must have dedicated staff to conduct the program activities and shall limit the use of staff from the affiliated nursing home to the extent practicable, but under no circumstances shall the ADHC program utilize staff from the nursing home dedicated to care for COVID-19 residents;
- Adequate disinfection of program space occurs in between sessions;
- Registrants and caregivers are informed on infection control practices implemented by the program;
- All staff are trained on infection control practices and program policies.
- Annual quality improvement plans are reviewed and up to date;
- Program leadership follows DOH guidance on reporting if staff person or a registrant is suspected of having COVID-19 to the appropriate jurisdiction having authority and the program may be temporarily suspended as a result of exposure to an individual, either staff or registrant, who tests positive. In addition, the ADHC program must designate a separate space, separate from the screening area, to serve as a holding area for staff or registrants presenting with symptoms of COVID-19 while awaiting transportation from the program;
- Policies are in place to communicate with caregivers on any confirmed COVID-19 case; and
- ADHC staff follow the applicable DOH “return to work” guidance related to confirmed or suspected COVID-19 diagnosis or exposure.

### **3. Transportation**

- All individuals in the vehicle must wear a mask and be seated 6 ft. apart for van transports and to the extent practicable transport shall be consistent with COVID-19 guidance issued by the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities which can be found at [https://opwdd.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/07/reopening-day-programs\\_revised\\_7.16.20.pdf](https://opwdd.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/07/reopening-day-programs_revised_7.16.20.pdf);
- Adhere to hygiene and sanitation requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and DOH and maintain cleaning logs;
- Drivers will be masked during transport;
- ADHC programs will investigate alternative sources of transportation, like caregiver or public transport, if necessary; and
- ADHC program will keep on file vendor COVID-19 Reopening Safety Plan.

Information for healthcare providers on topics related to COVID-19 is readily available on the Department of Health public website at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/information-healthcare-providers>. Please be advised that this guidance will be periodically re-evaluated and revisions made as appropriate.

Thank you for your ongoing support and cooperation in responding to COVID-19 concerns. Questions may be routed to [covidnursinghomeinfo@health.ny.gov](mailto:covidnursinghomeinfo@health.ny.gov).