



## **COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN**

Effective: March 13, 2020

***This plan is subject to change as the impact of COVID-19 evolves.***

### **PURPOSE**

Community preparedness planning for COVID-19 should include people at higher risk of developing serious illness from COVID-19 which includes individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with serious chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to STRiVE employees on preparing for, and responding to, COVID-19, which has the potential to pose a significant health and service disruption threat to individuals receiving services from STRiVE.

### **ASSUMPTION**

Local, state, and federal health authorities will be the source of the latest information and most up to date guidance on prevention, case definition, surveillance, treatment, and response to COVID-19 threats.

### **GOAL**

To protect the individuals receiving services from STRiVE, and its workforce, from harm resulting from exposure to COVID-19 during service delivery.

### **GENERAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

STRiVE's Disaster Preparedness Plan addresses leadership delegation of authority, assets management, employee infectious disease control and first aid trainings, communication strategies, information systems management, and resources and supplies guidance.

### **LOCAL THREAT**

Public health authorities at the federal, state, and/or local level have advised that COVID-19 is likely to or already has spread to Mesa County. STRiVE will activate the following surveillance, screenings, and cleanliness procedures as instructed by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state agencies, and/or local public health authorities.

- a. STRiVE's Director of Nursing will ensure staff of direct service programs are appropriately informed and trained on the known specific signs, symptoms, incubation periods, routes of infection, risks of exposure and recommendations for prevention and response as provided by the CDC and other relevant local, state, and federal public health agencies.
  - Individuals receiving services from STRiVE's Community and Employment Services and Residential Services will be supported in maintaining hand and respiratory hygiene, as well as cough etiquette.
  - Every sink will be well stocked with soap and paper towels for hand washing.
  - Alcohol-based hand rubs will be available.
  - Hand washing will be supported prior to all meals as well as following community outings.

- b. STRiVE will take precautions to minimize the risk of individuals receiving direct

services from STRiVE from receiving and/or spreading COVID-19 throughout our sites.

- Employees/contractors of STRiVE and visitors showing symptoms of respiratory infection, including a fever (100.4 or higher), cough, or shortness of breath will not be allowed to enter STRiVE buildings, day service facilities, or residential sites.
  - Individuals in services will be discouraged from attending Community and Employment services if showing symptoms of respiratory infection. If symptoms develop during service delivery, that individual will be isolated from contact with other individuals until they can be returned home or taken to see a medical provider.
  - Residents of group homes will receive daily temperature monitoring and if symptoms of respiratory infection develop, STRiVE will follow the Mesa County Health Department and physician direction.
- c. Signs will be posted regarding hand sanitation, respiratory etiquette, and visitor screening at the entries of all STRiVE buildings. Temperature monitoring of visitors will not be completed at this time.
- Signage will instruct visitors not to visit if they have symptoms of respiratory infection.
- d. STRiVE staff will be educated on STRiVE's plan to control exposure to individuals in services. This plan includes:
- Reporting any suspected exposure to COVID-19 while off duty to their supervisor and public health.
  - As a precautionary measure, employees who report an actual or suspected exposure to COVID-19 may be required to work remotely and self-screen for symptoms prior to reporting to work. Employees who typically do not work remotely (example: direct service professionals) will communicate with their supervisor to determine if there are any assignments that can be done remote. If there is no work available remotely, the employee will use their accrued sick time until cleared to return to work.
  - Prohibiting staff from reporting to work if they are sick until cleared to do so by appropriate medical authorities and in compliance with appropriate labor laws.
  - Group homes are participating in a mock scenario including symptoms and nursing and residential direction.
- e. STRiVE will follow current CDC guidelines for environmental cleaning specific to COVID-19 in addition to routine cleaning for the duration of the threat. Day service facilities, group homes, and STRiVE vehicles will be disinfected each day.
- f. STRiVE staff will be encouraged to use telehealth and teleconferencing tools for 1:1 service delivery in the community if there is a concern of the individual in services or the staff member showing respiratory infection symptoms or potential COVID-19 exposure:

- Care Coordination (service coordinators and case managers) will use remote conferencing to complete monitoring visits and facilitate team meetings.
  - Nurse Case Management Quarterly Visits to Host Homes will be done by phone and video conferencing as available.
- g. Employees in Administrative departments such as public relations, human resources, business office, and information technology will be encouraged to telework utilizing tools available to them and or to assist with tasks to provide for STRiVE individuals.
- h. Staff who develop signs of respiratory infection will abide by the following expectations.
- If an employee has a fever, they shall not return to work until they are 24 hours fever free without fever reducing medications. If the fever exceeds three days, STRiVE may request clearance from a medical provider.
    - i. If the employee provides direct service to individuals in service, we will require clearance from a medical provider PRIOR to returning to work.
    - ii. Supervisors will do their best to inform HR of any employee who has missed 3 or more consecutive days due to illness.
    - iii. If the employee misses work for an extended period of time or needs FMLA due to a serious illness, we will follow our current practices and may request a return to work from a medical provider.
  - On a daily basis, management will report COVID-19 related employee absences and teleworking so STRiVE leadership can closely monitor staffing resources.

### **SUSPECTED CASE OF COVID-19 AT A STRIVE SERVICE LOCATION**

- a. The individual receiving services, or staff, who exhibits signs of respiratory infection will be kept as isolated as possible and the public health authorities will be notified as prescribed by the Mesa County Health Department. The number of staff assigned to an affected individual will be kept at a minimum.
- b. Under the guidance of public health authorities, the transfer of the suspected infectious person will be arranged home or to the appropriate medical provider, whichever is most appropriate. *CDPHE will be providing STRiVE with regular updates on quarantine procedures. That information will be shared here.*
- c. STRiVE will conduct control activities such as management of infectious wastes, cleaning the facility, contacting exposed individuals, and monitoring for additional cases under the guidance of local health authorities.
- d. Under the guidance of public health authorities, quarantine interventions for

individuals in services and staff will be activated.

**EMPLOYER CONSIDERATIONS**

STRiVE management will consider its requirements under OSHA, state licensure, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), and other state or federal laws in determining the precautions it will take to protect individuals receiving services. Protecting individuals receiving services and employees is of paramount concern. Management will ensure:

- a. All actions are taken uniformly to all staff in like circumstances.
- b. Race, gender, marital status, country of origin, and other protected characteristics will not be considered until they are documented as relevant to the spread of disease.
- c. Reasonable accommodations will be made for employees, such as permitting employees to work remotely, if their job descriptions permit this.
- d. Generally, accepted scientific procedures, whenever available, will be used to determine the level of risk posed by an employee.
- e. Employees will be able to take sick time, leave time, and FMLA where appropriate while they are out of work.
- f. Employees will be permitted to return to work when cleared by a licensed physician.
- g. Employees who refuse at any time to take the precautions set out in this document may be subject to discipline.