

March 19, 2020

Dear parents, guardians, stakeholders and friends:

I am sending this communication to update you on how St. Ann's is currently handling the Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. First off, thank you for your continued patience and understanding awaiting this update. Our goal was to send out a notice that was inclusive and up to date with the most recent information. St. Ann's senior management team has been participating in regular conference call meetings at the State level that included chief representatives from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the MA Department of Public Health, DCF, DMH, DEEC, St. Ann's legal team, maaps, and other private 766 schools & residential programs. St. Ann's has also been in regular contact with the Methuen Department of Public Health, St. Ann's pediatrician and St. Ann's board of directors. St. Ann's is thoughtfully and carefully planning and responding to the evolving circumstances.

While risk to Massachusetts residents was initially described as low, things have rapidly evolved to make the situation a bit more concerning and requiring more careful and thoughtful intervention and planning. The Center for Disease Control (CDC), The MA Department of Public Health, (DPH), and the Governor have all given guidance, made specific recommendations and/or have mandated changes to our normal operating procedures.

I want to share that St. Ann's has taken numerous steps to try and ensure the well-being and health of all the youth/students we serve, their families and our staff members. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Identifying high risk residents/students and staff for close monitoring
- Increasing sanitation measures throughout the campus
- Educating residents/students and staff about effective handwashing methods and safely managing coughs, sneezing, etc. to prevent the spread of infections of all kinds
- Sharing of information regarding COVID-19 with youth, families and staff
- Restricting entry/exit areas for all coming and going
- Decreasing all meetings or gatherings to under 10 participants
- Providing teleconferencing options so communication between family members and others can continue
- Postponing or using teleconferencing as an option for all internal/external meetings
- Identifying physical space and staff to handle any potential need for isolation or quarantine of our youth
- Restricting recreational activities
- Limiting movement of all staff and youth throughout the program
- Offering and/or providing breakfast/lunch options and education materials to all students
- Rescheduling of all routine appointments
- Increasing nursing hours
- Restricting admissions
- Making clinical and administrative staff available for more frequent check-ins and general education for our residents/students
- Using telehealth for some clinical services

- At this time, we are asking that all visits with youth at St. Ann's be postponed until further notice. Teleconferencing options have, and will continue to be, made available to parents/guardians, etc. Parents/guardians who refuse these options will be provided psychoeducation relative to the potential risk of transmission among our population and in our environment. In the event that the education provided does not dissuade them, our CEO and/or Medical Director will be reaching out to these individuals to better understand the extenuating circumstances prompting the request, and identify potential alternatives.
- In addition, we have conferred with St. Ann's pediatrician's office and the local DPH office and have established an open line of communication for assistance if the need should arise.
- Finally, at this point we have closed our school through 3/27, and hope/anticipate the reopening on 3/30 after a very thorough deep-clean and disinfection. As you may know the MA Governor's last edict to close schools for three weeks does not apply to 766 private/residential schools. This may change, but for now St. Ann's will base its decisions on the information available from various state agencies, health care officials and St. Ann's own unique needs. If the 3/30 reopening date changes you will be informed as soon as possible.

We understand that these decisions may present challenges for our families, collaterals and residents/students. However, we made these decisions out of an abundance of caution. As previously stated, we still have no knowledge of any COVID-19 specific threats to our St. Ann's community. These decisions should help to limit any potential exposure to our residential/school community and work place environment, as well as help minimize the spread of the virus.

As you are aware, we have all found ourselves navigating uncharted territory as we implement plans and strategies to respond to the current novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We will continue to work with local/state agencies, trade organizations and medical professionals to keep informed and provide the most competent care possible to the youth and families we serve and St. Ann's as a whole. We appreciate your support during these challenging times and are thankful for the opportunity and privilege to be able to work with the youth that you have entrusted into our care. You can be sure that we will do our very best to meet this responsibility successfully.

Please know that St. Ann's will continue to update you as frequently as possible and in the meantime don't hesitate to reach out to one of St. Ann's team members if we can be of further assistance.

I hope you all remain healthy!



Joe Cronin  
President and CEO  
St. Ann's Home and School