



September 22, 2020

Dear Seven Hills Family Services Caregivers,

It is clear that everyone in our Massachusetts Community has taken the global Covid-19 pandemic seriously. Because of some very concerning projections in the spring of 2020, Massachusetts residents have become more flexible and resilient, and determined to “Stop the Spread.”

According to the Mass.gov “Dashboard of Public Health Indicators”, Massachusetts has brought the daily average of positive tests to less than 1% (254) down from high of almost 5,000 cases on April 24, 2020. SHFS overall has had very few cases and has sustained 53 days without a positive case reported. The current lull across the state and Seven Hills Foundation allows us time to pause, plan and prepare. While none of us can foresee the future, leadership requires us to consider both the positive and negative projections in our planning.

We have developed on-going guidance and procedures to limit the exposure of the individuals that we support and feel confident in the measures we have taken so far. We appreciate your continued diligence in working with SHFS staff to implement these together.

As we end the summer and approach the fall and winter seasons, we have been thoughtfully considering the individuals and families that we support.

State regulations that guide our services have not changed during the pandemic in regards to providing monthly home visitation. Home visits have been, and are still required, per Mass Health and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) regulations. Out of an abundance of health and safety precautions, we have ceased most in-person visits beginning in March, with remote/virtual home visits having taken their place. All of our families were gracious and accepting of this dramatic change.

SHFS clinical and nursing teams recently determined that since it has been six-months since many of our families and individuals have seen us in-person, now is a reasonable time to do an in-person home visit prior to the winter season.

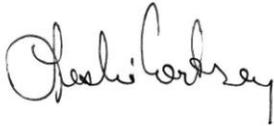
Over the next two months, we will be conducting at least one in-person home visit for all Shared Living and Adult Family Care (AFC) homes. We understand that there may be some concerns associated with this decision and SHFS has developed rigorous procedures to maximize health and safety for you and your households during this visit.

- Home visits will be scheduled in advance and limited to one SHFS staff.
- Prior to the visits, ideally the previous day, staff will call to ask a few questions and to explain health and safety procedures during the next day's visit.
- Prior to entering your home on the day of the visit, a brief screening will also take place.
- The visit will be short, typically less than 30 minutes. We ask for your assistance with this limitation.
- Staff will be wearing appropriate PPE. SHFS will provide Individual and Caregiver PPE as needed for the visit.
- The visit may be a bit different than in the past, as staff will only review limited health and safety items.
- Please ensure only Individual and Caregiver and no other household members are in the room where you are meeting.

We appreciate your attention to these procedures to ensure the health and safety of everyone.

Please contact a Seven Hills Family Services supervisor, case manager, or nurse for more information or questions.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. I am grateful for the dedication, teamwork, and care that define our Seven Hills Family Services community.



Leslie Courtney
Vice President
Seven Hills Family Services