



Concerning COVID-19 and Seven Hills ASPiRE! Program Closures

June 29th, 2020

Members of the Seven Hills ASPiRE! Community:

We're writing with an important update regarding the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, and the plans to reopen Massachusetts. While phase three of Governor Baker's plan to reopen Massachusetts begins on July 6th, we do not yet have permission from our state funders to reopen, and do not yet have critical guidance on capacity, screening, staffing, or supplies requirements. As such **all Seven Hills ASPiRE! service locations will remain closed through July 17th, and will not reopen any earlier than Monday July 20th. We may need to extend this date depending upon the guidance we receive, and what modifications are necessary in response.** We are closely monitoring state guidance and will reach out once we are given confirmed dates and guidance to reopen.

While we are waiting for reopening requirements from both MassHealth and DDS, we do know that our services will be significantly different going forward than they were prior to COVID-19. We anticipate that cloth face coverings (or alternatives, like a face shield) will be mandatory for all persons served and visitors. Significant capacity restrictions will be in place at our physical locations and on our vehicles, to allow for social distance, screening, cleaning, and sanitizing. Our live video / Zoom programming and check-ins by video and phone will continue, to allow for remote and hybrid models where appropriate.

These capacity restrictions also mean that some of our staff, who have not been working, will be returning in part as persons served do. Other staff will be working in roles that differ from what they were doing before – more community-based and remote work, as well as more cleaning and sanitizing. It is likely that still other staff will be offered positions in other Seven Hills affiliates, as their ASPiRE! positions will be frozen indefinitely due to capacity and other restrictions.

Vocational services and supports funded by the Mass Rehabilitation Commission will continue with additional precautions for safety, as well as increased use of video and remote technologies. Community Based Day Supports will be provided in small groups in the community as much as is feasible given other restrictions. Day Habilitation and Adult Day Health will resume in-program with capacity restrictions and precautions to limit transmission, such as persons served remaining with the same small group of peers throughout the day.

Transportation is unlikely to be available until September through the vendors that previously provided it. We will need your help in getting persons served to and from day program locations. An exception is Adult Day Health, which has a separately-funded transportation mechanism and may resume more quickly based on the capacity / readiness of Best Ride, our ADH transportation vendor.

We recently completed a survey process where we heard back from more than 150 persons served and other stakeholders, providing feedback on reopening considerations, suggestions, and service delivery. If you did not receive that survey you can review the questions and your feedback with your program director or assistant program director.



ASPiRE! program directors and members of our leadership team are participating actively each week in trade association and state funder workgroups on reopening. The Executive Office of Health and Human Services is reportedly requiring that all state agencies align and observe the same basic provisions in their reopening plans, which has contributed to the delayed timeline. As of now we expect guidance sometime this week, which will require time to respond to and implement in our sites. We ask for your support and thank you for your patience – this has been both an uncertain and a frustrating time for all, including our staff.

For additional information, please consider the following resources:

- The Seven Hills ASPiRE! Community Facebook page, where Zoom schedules are posted: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/aspirecommunitygroup>
- The Seven Hills website, where regular updates will be posted: www.sevenhills.org
- The Mass.gov coronavirus page: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-updates-and-information>
- The CDC's coronavirus page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>
- The Mass Options website, covering services available to seniors and those with developmental differences: www.massoptions.com or by phone at 1.844.422.6277

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Hayston".

Dr. Jay Hayston, LP.D, MBA

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Program Locations and Contact Persons

- **799 West Boylston Street Day Habilitation**
 - o Program Director Katie Kozlowski: kkozlowski@sevenhills.org and 508.796.1928
- **Adult Day Health**
 - o Program Director Kelly Clifford: kclifford@sevenhills.org and 508.983.1366
- **Devens Community Based Day and Employment Supports**
 - o Program Director Tracey Hecker: thecker@sevenhills.org and 978.391.8221
- **Devens Day Habilitation**
 - o Program Director Laura Seppa: lseppa@sevenhills.org and 978.391.8226
- **Employment Services (including independent employment supports, Pre-ETS, CIES, and SES)**
 - o Program Director Karen Chiurri: kchiurri@sevenhills.org and 508.981.0447
- **Goddard Memorial Drive Community Based Day and Employment Supports**
 - o Program Director Jen Keaney: jkeaney@sevenhills.org and 508.796.1502
- **Goddard Memorial Drive, Worcester Day Habilitation**
 - o Program Director Cathi Joseph: cjoseph@sevenhills.org and 508.796.1518
- **Milford Community Based Day and Employment Supports**
 - o Program Director Fedna Laurent: flaurent@sevenhills.org and 508.458.4500
- **Seven Hills Food Services, including Hope Avenue Kitchen and the Seven Hills Cafes**
 - o Program Director Alexi Koroskenyi: akoroskenyi@sevenhills.org and 508.826.8374