



## **New Mexico COVID-19 Safety Plan**

### **A.W. Holdings, LLC d/b/a Benchmark Human Services (Benchmark) and Anthony Wayne Rehabilitation Center Inc. (AWRC)**

A.W. Holdings, LLC d/b/a Benchmark Human Services (Benchmark) and Anthony Wayne Rehabilitation Center for Handicapped and Blind, Inc. (AWRC), headquartered in Fort Wayne, Indiana, provide services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and behavioral health needs in 14 states. (Benchmark is a for-profit, privately held company, and AWRC is its not-for-profit sister company. Employees from both entities are employed under Benchmark, so for the purpose of this Plan, we will refer to both simply as Benchmark).

In mid-March 2020, Benchmark made significant changes to business structure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Company closed all congregate day services sites. Benchmark's residential programs are essential services and have been in operation continuously.

As the Company continues to re-open and maintain services, it will follow the stringent protocol it has had in place in its residential and office settings throughout the pandemic. This Safety Plan includes those protocols and establishes additional guidelines for congregate settings and transportation to keep employees and persons served safe. The Plan is based upon information available from the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the State of New Mexico and is subject to change based on further guidance from these and other public health agencies. Benchmark will monitor COVID-19 related guidance and will communicate any changes to this Plan. Please familiarize yourself with this Plan. We are counting on all employees to do their part to promote a healthy, safe working environment.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Plan please contact Chief Nursing Officer, Kim Galaviz RN, BSN, MPM, [kgalaviz@benchmarkhs.com](mailto:kgalaviz@benchmarkhs.com); (260) 744-6145 ext. 5865 or if you wish to report non-compliance with the Plan, please contact Chief Compliance Officer/COVID Safety Officer, Margie Cantey, [mcantey@benchmarkhs.com](mailto:mcantey@benchmarkhs.com); (260) 207-5614.

#### **1. Proof of Vaccination Status:**

Staff will be considered vaccinated 14 days after the second dose in a two-dose series (*Pfizer or Moderna*), or 14 days after a single dose vaccination (*Johnson & Johnson*). Those who have an unknown status will be regarded as unvaccinated. Benchmark employees may demonstrate proof of full vaccination status by presenting the following documents:

- a. The CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Card issued to the vaccine recipient by the vaccination site, or an electronic or physical copy of the same;
- b. The official record from the State's immunization registry;
- c. A record from a health care provider's portal/medical record system on official letterhead signed by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, registered nurse or pharmacist;

- d. A military immunization or health record from the United States Armed Forces; or e. Docket mobile phone application record or any state specific application that produces a digital health record.

*An employee who qualifies for an exemption from the vaccination (religious or medical/disability) may submit justification, to Katherine Key (Kkey@benchmarkhs.com) if requested.*

## 2. Health Screening

Benchmark employees are to monitor their health for the following potential signs and symptoms of COVID-19: fever or chills; cough; shortness of breath or difficult breathing; fatigue; muscle or body aches; headache; new loss of taste or smell; sore throat; congestion or running nose; nausea; vomiting; diarrhea and alert their supervisor. If employees have any of the mentioned signs or symptoms they are to contact their supervisor for further instruction. Protocols are in place to check the temperature of all employees/visitors prior to their shift or entering a home/facility. If an employee presents with a fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, they are not permitted in the residence or facility and are unable to work their scheduled shift. The employee will not return to work until Quarantine Policy guidelines have been met.

Within Benchmark’s residential and day services settings, temperatures are taken with a touch free thermometer so employees presenting with a fever do not enter the home. In this case, only a few new employees come to work per shift, so maintaining distance is easy. Plans have been developed for re-opening of congregate settings, which include monitoring temperatures while adhering to social distancing guidelines.

Health screenings are conducted by designated staff at each site by designated shift.

Temperature recording logs are confidential at all sites.

Professional staff, managers, and office staff self-monitor their temperatures and symptoms on a daily basis prior to reporting to work.

Self-wellness checks have been standard protocol in Benchmark’s residential settings and will continue. The Company will add this protocol to congregate settings as they reopen. Benchmark has asked employees to self-screen for other potential symptoms of COVID-19, i.e., dry cough, loss of smell or taste, etc. and to self-quarantine if they feel they have been exposed to the virus.

Employees are to immediately report to their supervisor if they have been exposed to, have symptoms, and/or test positive to COVID-19. A COVID-19 Employee Reporting form will be submitted to the Chief Compliance Officer and Vice President of HR for all COVID-19 positive employees. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that coworkers are notified of potential exposure from a COVID positive employee, as applicable. The following protocol will be followed before returning to work:

Employees with exposure to COVID-19 without symptoms:	Protocol/Policy

Have been boosted or; Completed the primary series of <i>Pfizer or Moderna</i> vaccine within the last 6 months or; Completed the primary series of <i>J &amp; J</i> vaccine within the last 2 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear an N95/KN95 mask for 10 days after the date of exposure*.</li> <li>• Test on day 5, if possible.</li> <li>• If symptoms develop get tested and quarantine.</li> </ul>
Completed the primary series of <i>Pfizer or Moderna</i> vaccine over 6 months ago and are NOT boosted or; Completed the primary series of <i>J &amp; J</i> vaccine over 2 months ago and are NOT boosted or; Are unvaccinated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarantine for 5 days after the date of exposure*. May return to work wearing an N95/KN95 mask for an additional 5 days.</li> <li>• If the local Benchmark program is operating on a contingency or crisis staffing status, employee may return to work wearing an N95/KN95 for 10 days after the date of exposure*.</li> <li>• Test on day 5, if possible.</li> <li>• If symptoms develop get tested and quarantine.</li> </ul>

It is very important for people with COVID-19 to remain apart from other people if possible, even if they are living together. Employees are encouraged to mask up and avoid close contact with positive household members. If separation of the person(s) with COVID-19 from others in your home is not possible, this is considered *ongoing* exposure, meaning repeated exposure will occur until that person(s) is no longer able to spread the virus to other people.

\*If employee is unable to avoid separation, the date of exposure will be extended to the last day of quarantine for the most recently infected person(s) in the household.

\*If employee or infected household member is able to fully separate, the exposure date is the last date of close contact with the infected person(s) in the household.

<b>Employees who have symptoms and/or test positive for COVID-19:</b>	<b>Protocol/Policy</b>
Everyone, regardless of vaccination status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarantine for 5 days from when symptoms first appeared or from testing date (not the result date if different).</li> <li>• If without symptoms or symptoms are improving after 5 days, employee can return to work wearing an N95/KN95 mask for an additional 5 days.</li> <li>• If employee has a fever, quarantine to continue until resolved.</li> <li>• Employees without symptoms who are positive may work in a COVID positive residence with proper PPE based on director discretion.</li> </ul>

### **Protocol for Employees returning to the United States from International Travel**

Employees returning to the United States from international travel must adhere to the following protocol:

**Fully Vaccinated Employees Must:**

- A. Get tested 3-5 days upon return (may work upon return, before testing).
- B. Monitor symptoms.

**Unvaccinated Employees Must:**

- A. Return to work wearing a N95/KN95 for 7-10 days from the return date of travel.
- B. Get tested 3-5 days upon return, continue mask use if negative for 7 days.
- C. If employee is not tested than an N95/KN95 mask should be worn for 10 days.
- D. Monitor symptoms.

All staff returning after quarantine may work as usual but must abide by all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidance. An increase in PPE may be utilized per director discretion based on geographical data on COVID- 19 outbreaks or other relevant factors. Regardless of vaccination status, all employees must wear a mask while working with others.

Benchmark has conducted hazard assessments to determine risk and to assist employees in ensuring the health and safety of homes/offices/vehicles. (Note: additional hazard assessments may be completed as needed to address circumstances not already identified in this Plan).

All staff returning after quarantine may work as usual but must abide by all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidance. An increase in PPE may be utilized per director discretion based on geographical data on COVID- 19 outbreaks or other relevant factors. Regardless of vaccination status, all staff must wear appropriate PPE or a mask as appropriate.

Benchmark has conducted hazard assessments to determine risk and to assist employees in ensuring the health and safety of homes/offices/vehicles. (Note: additional hazard assessments may be completed as needed to address circumstances not already identified in this Plan).

### **3. Cleaning**

Cleaning duties are shared among all employees, janitorial staff, and contracted cleaning companies. Within residential facilities, employees on each shift are responsible for thorough disinfecting of surfaces, including doorknobs, light switches, and other frequently touched surfaces, in addition to all counter tops, sinks, bathroom facilities, etc. In offices and congregate settings, each employee is responsible for disinfecting and cleaning their workspaces, while additionally, company janitorial staff or contracted cleaning companies clean shared surfaces.

Door knobs / light switches / high touch shared surfaces and restrooms will be regularly sanitized. Lunch rooms and break rooms will be sanitized after each break period. A check off list will be posted in each of these areas, so that the individual cleaning can sign off on the completed tasks.

All common workspaces, shared facilities like break rooms, mailrooms, and restrooms are cleaned on a regular schedule. Countertops, work stations, office and building entrance doors and handles, restroom facilities, and frequently touched surfaces such as light switches will need to be sanitized or disinfected. All disinfecting agents are EPA approved and are used according to directions.

Disinfecting supplies are distributed from local depositories if and when individual programs are having difficulty ensuring a steady supply. Inventories of supplies are maintained at the local program or office level.

#### **4. Employee Protection and PPE**

Hand sanitizer and wipes are located by all areas requiring regular cleaning in all areas, including offices, residential, and day services sites. Staff in residential/day sites have been issued individual hand sanitizers. Staff must wash their hands frequently, including before each shift, as well as before and after eating or after using the restroom, following the recommended CDC protocol (use a foaming cleanser, wash for at least 20 seconds, dry thoroughly).

Touch free waste receptacles have been provided.

Face masks are currently required in all residential/day facilities. Cloth masks are mandatory for employees working in congregate settings with individuals served, and in all office settings, except when an employee is working independently at their designated work station or office. This means all staff and visitors must wear a mask when moving through hallways, in restrooms and common spaces, in meetings and trainings, when visiting a colleague's office, etc. If a cloth face mask becomes soiled during an employee's shift a cloth face mask will be provided by the Company. Otherwise, employees are responsible for cleaning masks at home after their shift. Further protection of N95 or KN95 masks may be required and are provided per Company policy.

Face shields will be provided for instances in which people are closer than 6 feet apart and are at risk for coming into contact with bodily fluids, such as assisting individuals with rest rooming needs.

In residential settings, social distancing will not always be possible, so all staff are wearing PPE including face masks and face shields, and interactions within six feet are as limited as possible and under ten minutes. A similar approach will be used as day services start approximating normal operations. If any employee who is required by this Plan to wear a mask has a condition that makes that difficult or impossible, they should discuss reasonable accommodations with their Human Resources staff.

#### **5. Safety Education**

Throughout the pandemic, employees have received extensive training on protecting themselves and those served including information about transmission of COVID-19, cleaning, self-care, use of PPE, etc. COVID-19 education is provided to all new employees upon orientation. The home page of Benchmark's Intranet has been devoted to COVID-19 and is updated regularly with training materials, guidelines from the Company, as well as the CDC, OSHA, and other reputable medical resources. Managers receive, at least weekly, manager briefings on prevention, treatment, new protocols or policies, etc. Employees have, and will continue to meet with department supervisors to receive appropriate training. Flyers and posters have also been distributed and posted in homes, and office and congregate facilities.

#### **6. Workplace Restructuring**

All staff who can work from home are doing so and that stance will be maintained.

All workstations or activity stations in day program sites are to be positioned at minimum of 6 feet apart or physical Plexiglas barriers installed. Office settings will re-position work stations as much as possible to ensure social.

All staff who can work from home are doing so and that stance will be maintained. Areas of congestion have been routed for one way foot traffic. If contact must be within 6 feet and is prolonged for more than five minutes, all staff will wear facemasks.

Lunch and breaks will be staggered. Day services will take a phased approach to bringing people back to congregate facilities, starting with the least vulnerable populations.

In congregate sites, all individuals served and employees will wash hands before lunch or snacks. Tables and all surface areas to be sanitized before and after each person attends lunch. All tables will be stationed 6 feet apart, and will allow only one person per table. Lunch and breaks will be staggered. In office settings, employees must sit at least 6 feet apart when eating in the cafeteria or break rooms.

## **7. Transporting of Individuals Served**

Benchmark may provide transportation to individuals served for appointments, recreation, day programs, and employment options. All riders will be asked to minimize personal belongings. Lunches needed for day programs or employment options may sit on the individual's lap.

Transporting options:

- Individuals who can use public transportation may do so. Benchmark strongly encourages the individual to wear a mask while in the public.
- Individuals who use private transportation outside of Benchmark are asked to wear a mask to ensure the health and safety of any one who may also be transported. A plexi-shield is also recommended if this can be tolerated by the individual. Benchmark will ask the vendor to ensure all cleaning and disinfections guidelines be completed.
- Individuals who reside in a Benchmark residential program and who live together will receive transportation from an employee who works in that home. An employee may drive a company owned van or private car. Employees will wear, at a minimum, a cloth mask. Individuals served will be asked to wear a cloth mask. A plexi- shield is also recommended if this can be tolerated by the individual. Temperatures of individuals are taken four times a day and staff temperatures are taken prior to beginning their shift. Social distancing of 6 feet is recommended if the vehicle allows. Ideally, transportation will only include housemates, however, other riders may be picked up if the vehicle can still accommodate social distancing requirements. Each vehicle will be equipped with hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Benchmark will follow state and local health department recommendations until restrictions are lifted.
- Individuals served who live alone may receive transportation by a Benchmark employee. The employee will wear, at a minimum, a cloth mask. Individuals served will be asked to wear a cloth mask. A plexi-shield is also recommended if this can be tolerated by the individual. Social distancing of 6 feet is recommended if the vehicle allows. Other riders may be picked up if the vehicle can still accommodate social distancing requirements. The vehicle will be equipped with hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Benchmark will follow state and local health department recommendations until restrictions are lifted.

Benchmark enforces the cleaning and disinfection of company owned vehicles and vehicles owned by employees who transport individuals in the community.

Benchmark will follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Cleaning and Disinfection for Non-Emergency Transport Vehicles.

At a minimum, Benchmark will clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces in the vehicle at the beginning and end of each of destination. While cleaning it is recommended that doors and windows remain open. Wear gloves and clean with detergent or soap and water if surfaces are visibly dirty prior to disinfectant application.

Cleaning the interior of the vehicle will include:

- Hard seats (spray cloth seats with Lysol cleaner, if available)
- Arm rests
- Door handles
- Seat belts
- Buckles
- Light and air controls
- Doors and windows
- Grab handles

Dispose of gloves after cleaning and immediately wash hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

## 8. Visitors

Virtual visits with individuals served using Zoom, FaceTime, or other technologies are highly encouraged in lieu of face-to-face visits. In office settings, visitors must wear masks and report having no fever or COVID-19 symptoms to be admitted into the facilities. Notices indicating this directive are posted on all public entrances. Additionally, virtual meetings with potential visitors are encouraged for those working in office settings. Visitors who arrive for a scheduled appointment with Benchmark staff will be provided with a disposable mask if they do not have their own, as long as they are displaying no symptoms of a coronavirus infection.

### ***Amended August 18, 2020***

All individuals who receive services administered through the New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) must follow the Public Health Order that states “***all New Mexicans should be staying in their homes for all but the most essential activities and services. When New Mexicans are not in their homes, they must strictly adhere to social distancing protocols and wear face coverings to minimize risks. These sacrifices are the best contribution that each of us can individually make to protect the health and wellbeing of our fellow citizens and the State as a whole. In accordance with these purposes, this Order and its exceptions should be narrowly construed to encourage New Mexicans to stay in their homes for all but the most essential activities***”

It is the position of DDSD that individuals receiving services administered by DDSD (DD Waiver, Mi Via Waiver, Medically Fragile Waiver, and State General Fund services) should stay in their homes for all but the most essential activities and services as per the Public Health Order. Should individuals and/or their guardians choose to leave their home and access the most essential activities and services, they assume the same risk of contracting COVID-19 as all others in New Mexico assume that risk.

### ***Amended March 15, 2021***

In order to report to the court and fulfill their legal duties, court-appointed guardians and conservators need to have access to the protected person(s) for whom they have been appointed, in order to accurately assess the living situation and overall well-being of the protected person(s).

Effective March 15, 2021, Benchmark will work with court-appointed guardians and conservators to facilitate monthly visitation, or the appropriate recurrence requested by the guardian or conservator, and to schedule a date and time for the visit. Court-appointed guardians and conservators are defined as any corporate/professional guardianship agency or any person appointed by the courts to serve in the role as guardian and/or conservator. Benchmark and the guardian or conservator must adhere to the following requirements throughout the entirety of the visit:

Court-appointed guardians and/or conservators must stay home and not conduct indoor visits if they have been exposed to COVID-19 in the last fourteen (14) days or are showing COVID-19 symptoms. Anyone who has had close contact with a person who has COVID-19 should also stay home and monitor their health.

All court-appointed guardian and/or conservator visits must be scheduled at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance.

Benchmark will establish a point of contact, who has authority to schedule court-appointed guardian and/or conservator visits, e.g. Service Coordinator, House Supervisor, etc.

Benchmark will work with court-appointed guardians and/or conservators to facilitate monthly visitation, or the appropriate recurrence requested by the guardian or conservator, and to schedule a date and time for the visit. Benchmark and the court-appointed guardian must agree on the date and time that the indoor visit will occur, based upon the number of individuals receiving services in the home, staff available during the time of the proposed visit, and ability to implement appropriate disinfection between visits.

Benchmark will allow guardians and/or conservators to view the living area, kitchen area, bedroom and bathroom, etc., of the protected person.

Prior to any court-appointed guardian and/or conservator entering the home, Benchmark will perform screening including symptom and temperature check. Screening requirements of court-appointed guardians and or conservators must include the following: o

- Ask the court-appointed guardian and/or conservator if they have a fever (above 100.4) and confirm by taking their temperature using a temporal thermometer.
- Ask the court-appointed guardian and/or conservator “Have you felt like you had a fever in the past day?”
- Ask the court-appointed guardian and/or conservator “Do you have a new or worsening cough today?”
- Ask the court-appointed guardian and/or conservator, “Do you have any of these other symptoms?”
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell



- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- If the answer is “Yes” to any of these questions, the visit will not be allowed.
- If the answer is “No” to each of these questions, the visit may proceed.

Court-appointed guardian and/or conservator visits must adhere to the mass gathering requirements of the current Public Health Order for the respective county they are visiting. If any individual (person served) in the home tests positive for COVID-19; the court-appointed guardian and/or conservator visit must be cancelled. Benchmark will keep visitor logs (visitor logs will assist with contact tracing in the event of a COVID-19 positive case) and assure that core principles of COVID-19 Infection Prevention are followed throughout the visit.

***Amended April 21, 2021***

Benchmark will follow the state’s “Red to Green” framework, which includes four levels of operations that are based on a county’s ability to satisfy specified metrics: Turquoise Level, Green Level, Yellow Level, and Red Level. A county will remain at a given operating level so long as it continues to satisfy the specified metrics for that level. The Department of Health maintains the official map displaying each county’s current level at: <https://cvprovider.nmhealth.org/public-dashboard.html>. The Department of Health updates this map every other Wednesday. If a county fails to meet the specified metrics for a given level, the county must begin operating at the lower level’s restrictions within 48 hours of the map’s update. If a county begins meeting the specified metrics for a less restrictive level, the county may begin operating at that level’s restrictions immediately upon the map’s update.

**Red Level – Very High Risk**

Counties at the Red Level are those with a new COVID-19 case incident rate of greater than 8 cases per 100,000 inhabitants during the most recent two-week period and an average percent of positive COVID-19 test results over the most recent 14-day period greater than 5%.

**Yellow Level – High Risk**

Counties at the Yellow Level have either a new COVID-19 case incidence rate of no greater than 8 cases per 100,000 inhabitants during the most recent two-week period, or an average percent of positive COVID-19 test results over the most recent 14-day period less than or equal to 5%.

**Green Level – Medium Risk**

Counties at the Green Level have both a new COVID-19 case incidence rate of no greater than 8 cases per 100,000 inhabitants during the most recent two-week period, and an average percent of positive COVID-19 test results over the most recent 14-day period less than or equal to 5%.

**Turquoise Level – Low Risk**

Counties at the Turquoise Level have both a new COVID-19 case incidence rate of no greater than 8 cases per 100,000 inhabitants during the most recent four-week period, and an average percent of positive COVID-19 test results over the most recent four-week period less than or equal to 5%.

***Amended August 20, 2021***

Beginning August 20, 2021, unless a healthcare provider instructs otherwise, all individuals age 2 years and older will wear a mask or multilayer cloth covering in all indoor public settings except when eating or drinking.

### ***Beginning August 23, 2021***

All staff are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 unless they qualify for an exception, If an individual does not qualify for an exception, the individual will:

1. Receive the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine within 10 days of the of August 23, 2021 and their second dose within 40 days of their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine; and
2. Provide proof of vaccination to their respective supervisor.

Staff may be exempt from the COVID-19 vaccination if they have a qualifying medical condition which would endanger their health or they are entitled under the American's with Disabilities Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or any other applicable law to a disability-related reasonable accommodation or a sincerely held religious belief accommodation. To be eligible for an exception refer to New Mexico Public Health Order dated August 17, 2021.

### **Extended visits outside the home**

Benchmark Human Services (Benchmark) recognizes that there may be instances in which family members or guardians wish to invite family members receiving waiver services to their home. Benchmark will utilize the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) meeting to discuss and plan for all COVID-related needs and changes to service delivery. It is the position of Benchmark that an individual must quarantine for fourteen (14) days following arranged visits. The first priority is that the quarantine would take place in the family home. If this is not possible then the individual will be quarantined at their Benchmark home. The IDT will assist in the development of COVID safe plans for:

- Extended family stays and quarantine procedures;
- Telehealth (telemedicine or telehealth for HCBS services) needs;
- Accessing desired or needed health care in person;
- Service delivery options while staying at home;
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) needs;
- Access to cloth masks and issues related to wearing masks;
- Budgetary issues;
- Returning to school, work, or volunteer sites;
- Accessing day services in the home;
- Safe transportation;
- Remote versus in person monitoring needs;
- Discuss pros, cons for in person visits and risk for exposure; and
- Accessing the most essential services and activities as per the Public Health Order.

IDTs are expected to meet remotely (telephonically or via electronic options) to discuss and plan for activities that can be completed in the home as well as plan for activities that could be completed outside of the home and are in alignment with and do not violate DDSD's Guidance or the Public Health Order(s) issued by the Department of Health Secretary.

The frequency of meetings will depend on the individual's needs and changing situations. Decisions should be clearly reflected and documented by the case manager, consultant, and CSC in meeting minutes and any related service plan revisions. Case managers and consultants should start facilitating meetings now for planning purposes related to COVID-19 changes in service delivery and needs. Subsequent meetings should occur as necessary.

Planning meetings should include the waiver participant, guardians, and employer of records, as applicable, managed care organization care coordinators, and team members/support staff.

If the team feels the individual's family is reliable and supports the leave of absence then the visitation questionnaire will be completed just prior to the leave and upon return to the Benchmark home. Once the individual returns to the home a "medium risk" protocol will be put in place. .

**Beginning August 1, 2020 Benchmark** nurses may resume face to face visits in accordance with DD Waiver standards. It is required that the notes resulting from these visits must be entered in Therap in accordance with March 20, 2020 Guidance Document. Nurses must wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), maintain social distancing if possible, and abide by COVID Safe Practices.

**Beginning August 1, 2020 Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, and Behavior Support Consultants (BSC)** may resume face to face therapy (clinical sessions) in the home. Therapists and behavior support consultants must wear appropriate PPE, maintain social distancing if possible, and abide by COVID Safe Practices. Clinical sessions must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance with Benchmark.

- Therapists and BSCs must stay home and not conduct face to face clinical sessions if they have been exposed to COVID-19 in the last fourteen (14) days or are showing COVID-19 symptoms. Anyone who has had close contact with a person who has COVID-19 should also stay home and monitor their health.
- All therapy and BSC face to face clinical sessions must be scheduled at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance.
- The primary point of contact is the Benchmark program coordinator who has authority to schedule therapy and BSC clinical sessions.
- Benchmark will set the appropriate hours during which therapy and/or BSC clinical sessions may occur, based upon the number of individuals receiving services in the home, staff available during the time of the proposed visit, and ability to implement appropriate disinfection between sessions.
- Prior to any therapist entering the home, Benchmark will perform screening including symptom and temperature checks. Screening requirements of therapists and BSCs will include the following:
  - Ask the therapist and/or BSC if they have traveled out of state within the last fourteen (14) days
  - Ask the therapist and/or BSC if they have a fever (above 100.4) and take their temperature using a temporal thermometer.
  - Ask the therapist and/or BSC "Have you felt like you had a fever in the past day?"
  - Ask the therapist and/or BSC "Do you have a new or worsening cough today?"
  - Ask, "In the past 14 days, have you been on a commercial flight?"

- Ask the therapist if they have you been in close contact (within 6 feet) for greater than 10 minutes, lived with or cared for someone who has been diagnosed with COVID - 19, presumed positive or with the symptoms listed below within the last 14 days?
- Ask the therapist and/or BSC, “Do you have any of these other symptoms?”
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

If the answer is “Yes” to any of these questions, the session will not proceed.

If the answer is “No” to each of these questions, the session may proceed.

- Therapy and BSC clinical sessions shall adhere to the mass gathering requirements of the current Public Health Order.
- Therapists and BSCs must wear appropriate PPE following guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
  - Therapists and BSCs must wear a face mask and/or face covering and disposable gloves throughout the entirety of the clinical session. The face mask/covering must be worn properly (covering the nose and mouth) throughout the duration of the visit; gloves must be disposed of between clinical sessions.
  - Therapists and BSCs who refuse to wear a face mask/face covering and disposable gloves will be asked to leave the home; and a report of non-compliance will be filed with the DDS Regional Office.
  - Therapists and BSCs must follow the All Together New Mexico COVID-19 Safe Practices 2020.
- Social Distancing Enforcement:
  - When possible, therapists and BSCs should maintain social distancing to the extent possible while conducting the session.
  - No more than one therapist or BSC may conduct a session in the home at the same time.
  - Minimize gestures that promote close contact. For example, don’t shake hands, do elbow bumps or wave and verbally greet them.

**Beginning August 1, 2020 outdoor visitation** may begin for family members and guardians for individuals in Supported Living and Intensive Medical Living Services. Indoor visitation is not permitted at this time.

- Benchmark will remind visitors to stay home if they have been exposed to COVID-19 in the last fourteen (14) days or are showing COVID-19 symptoms. Anyone who has had close contact with a person who has COVID-19 should also stay home and monitor their health.

Visitors who live with those at higher risk should also consider the potential risk to their loved ones.

- All social visits must be scheduled at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance. This requirement does not apply to emergency situations or in response to complaints of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- The Benchmark program coordinator will be the point of contact, who has authority to schedule visitation.
- Outdoor visits at the individual's home may last up to 60 minutes.
- The Benchmark program coordinator will set the appropriate hours during which visitation may occur, based upon the number of individuals receiving services in the home, staff available during the time of the proposed visit, and ability to implement appropriate disinfection between visits.
- Visitors may not enter the home for any reason.
- At the visit, Benchmark will provide screening requirements for the visitor(s), including symptom and temperature check. Screening requirements of visitors must include the following:
  - Ask the visitor(s) if they have traveled out of state within the last fourteen (14) days. ▪ If the answer is "Yes" the visit will not proceed.
  - Ask the visitor(s) if they have a fever (above 100.4) by taking their temperature using a temporal thermometer.
  - Ask the visitor(s) "Have you felt like you had a fever in the past day?"
  - Ask the visitor(s) "Do you have a new or worsening cough today?"
  - Ask the visitor(s) "In the past 14 days, have you been on a commercial flight?"
  - Ask the visitor(s) "Have you been in close contact (within 6 feet) for greater than 10 minutes, lived with or cared for someone who has been diagnosed with COVID - 19, presumed positive or with the symptoms listed below within the last 14 days?"
  - Ask the visitor(s), "Do you have any of these other symptoms?"
    - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
    - Fatigue
    - Muscle or body aches
    - Headache
    - New loss of taste or smell
    - Sore throat
    - Congestion or runny nose
    - Nausea or vomiting
    - Diarrhea

If the answer is "Yes" to any of these questions, the visit will not proceed.

If the answer is "No" to each of these questions, the visit may proceed.

#### **Social Distancing Enforcement:**

- Visits shall adhere to the mass gathering requirements of the current Public Health Order.
- Visits must occur outdoors.
- Tables and/or chairs must be arranged to allow for social distancing.
- When visitors arrive, minimize gestures that promote close contact. For example, don't shake hands or give hugs, do elbow bumps or wave and verbally greet them.

#### **Must Wear Face Mask/Coverings:**

- Visitors must wear face mask/coverings/cloth face coverings throughout the entirety of the visit.
- If the visitor is not wearing a face mask/coverings when they arrive the visit cannot occur.
- Any visitor refusing to wear a mask will be reported to the Department of Health COVID compliance unit.

**Clean Hands Often:**

- Benchmark will provide hand sanitizer in the location of the visit.
- Visitors must hand sanitize upon arrival.
- If visitors and the individual are having a meal (outdoors), remind visitors to sanitize their hands before eating food.

**Limit Contact with Commonly Touched Surfaces or Shared items:**

- Use touchless garbage cans or pails. Use gloves when removing garbage bags or handling and disposing of trash. Wash hands after removing gloves.
- Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces between uses; wash, clean, and sanitize them after each visit.

**9. Position or Individual in Charge**

The Vice President of Human Resources and the Chief Nursing Officer will be in charge of implementation of this plan. The Safety Committee will monitor logs and responses so that positive trends can be encouraged and negative trends addressed.

It is imperative that all management staff model the practices and procedures expected of employees so as to set the example and help reinforce the response plan among all employees.

**10. Communication Regarding Changes to the Plan**

As States continue to reduce restrictions, Benchmark recognizes there may be an increase in positive COVID-19 cases resulting in changes to protocol. Any changes to this Plan will be communicated to management through a manager briefing and will be posted on the Intranet with a revision date. Changes that directly affect individuals served will be communicated to individuals and/or parents/guardians in writing or through their preferred method of communication.