

Dear Catholic Housing and Community Services Team,

I realize that many of you are being inundated with questions regarding coronavirus, especially since seniors seem to be the most vulnerable to this virus. First and foremost, we need to take our lead from experts in the field such as the Departments of Health. With this in mind, there are many steps that we can take and available resources that we should be utilizing. Below is a list of important strategies to keep in mind.

- Although the virus is spread primarily through the air, it can live on hard surfaces for several days, so wipe down hard surfaces and encourage staff and seniors to wash their hands frequently or use hand sanitizer. Additionally, everyone should cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze with their arm.
- Keep updated with the current status of the coronavirus with information from the [PA Department of Health](#) and the [Center for Disease Control](#). Please post the CDC flyers attached in your places of work and feel free to make copies to hand out to seniors attending CHCS programs. Use these resources to educate staff and seniors on the coronavirus. These sites are updated regularly. Be aware that there are scams targeted at seniors regarding coronavirus vaccines and medications.
- If you make home visits to see senior clients, please call them in advance of your visit and ask if anyone in the household has been sick. When you arrive at the home, ask again before entering if anyone in the household has been sick. If someone has been sick, do not visit the home and offer assistance via telephone. If while visiting someone, you become aware of someone in the home being sick, please leave the home.
- If you work in a CHCS senior housing building, educate the residents regarding staying in their apartment if they are not feeling well and encourage them to let you know via a phone call. If any resident of our housing sites is diagnosed with COVID-19 or has been exposed, we will work with and follow the instructions of the PA Department of Health. We are working closely with HumanGood PA on ensuring that the housing buildings are cleaned effectively.
- If there is a case in any of CHCS' areas of work, we may need to close a site(s) to sterilize for several days. If you have a laptop and/or work cell phone, please bring them home with you every evening so that you are prepared for a potential site shutdown. Make sure that you are able to change work voicemails remotely to advise clients and colleagues that the site is shut down.
- Be aware that there are some areas designated by the CDC with a Level 3 travel advisory. Travel to and from these locations requires individuals to stay at home for 14 days upon return. This list can be found at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>.

- If you or someone you work with is feeling ill and is concerned that they have been exposed to the coronavirus, please contact your primary care physician. That physician will contact the PA Department of Health if needed.
- I have also attached flyers to post and an article from the National Council on Aging that I thought would be helpful in educating our seniors on the coronavirus.

I understand that the coronavirus is an alarming issue to navigate. Please base your reaction on facts provided by Health organization such as the Department of Health and Center for Disease Control. Situations such as this are stressful and generate anxiety for staff and clients, please be understanding of these reactions and assure them we are following the guidance of the appropriate experts.

We will be in regular contact regarding this situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather Huot". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Heather Huot, MSW, LSW

Director

Catholic Housing and Community Services