People, Inc. COVID-19 Coronavirus Update - March 13, 2020

Although there are no reported cases of COVID-19 Coronavirus at People Inc., we are taking numerous precautions. We know that this is a stressful time, and people want to know what they can do right now to protect themselves and their loved ones. The health and safety of the people we support, their families and our employees remain our highest priority.

Six years ago, People Inc. proactively established an Emergency Preparedness Program and has been training staff, running drills and hosting tabletop exercises since that time. Our staff is routinely trained on Universal Precautions, which have been identified as one of the most effective precautionary measures that can be taken.

To stay on top of the current situation, we are actively monitoring the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website, which is the premier source of fact-based and current information. You can also consult the website directly at cdc.gov. We are in contact with and monitoring websites of the NYS and County Health Departments and NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, among others.

Our Emergency Preparedness Team is meeting daily to ensure our actions are informed by the most current CDC and Department of Health guidance, and proactive plans are in place and adjusted as needed. Additionally, People Inc. has protocols in place and has been taking steps cleaning and disinfecting throughout our residences, programs, apartments and administrative offices to minimize the spread of viruses and other illnesses. We will continue to work with local and state health agencies and key partners in both planning and taking appropriate actions. We have changed our Visitor Policy based on emerging info from the NYS Department of Health, which is now in effect at all of our agency locations. We are preparing for a range of potential scenarios, including some potential cancellations of events out of an abundance of caution. For updates regarding cancellations, please see Upcoming Events on the People Inc. website.

We have established a dedicated phone line and email address for concerns regarding this situation: 716.817.7445 or email COVIDconcern@people-inc.org.
How you can help:

Consider these best practices from the American Red Cross to help prevent the spread of any respiratory virus:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water, if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Practice other good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.
- Disinfect doorknobs, switches, handles, computers, telephones, bedside tables, bathroom sinks, toilets, counters, toys and other surfaces that are commonly touched around the home or workplace.

If you or your loved one are exhibiting signs of illness, please consult with your physician. Please note that this is a rapidly changing situation and we may need to make quick decisions and implement new policies without advanced notice to conform with health department guidance. Check often for latest updates, which can be found under the “Coronavirus Update” section on the people-inc.org homepage. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in managing an effective response to the potential threat of this illness.