



FROM THE DESK OF

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Greetings from World Services for the Blind:

I know that there are so many uncertainties right now in the world right now, and the information and misinformation being disseminated by the news and social media can leave one wondering if this is ever going to come to an end.

Know that the leadership at WSB is doing everything we can to protect our clients, our partners and our stakeholders that come to live at WSB or just visit.

As of today, we are reissuing our COVID directives, but know that what is communicated on campus may change before the written policy is updated.

As the only residential center in the United States that remained open, not only serving current clients, but accepting new admissions during the rise of the number of positive cases, we have taken great pride in remaining free of the virus the entire time. While there are many schools of thought offering advice on how to manage during the pandemic, WSB leadership follows CDC guidance based on congregate settings.

Below you will find the guidelines for the WSB campus to be followed by employees, clients and guests.

If you have any questions or if you feel that you should be exempt from the below policies and procedures please feel free to contact me directly at 501-664-7100 ext. 220 or via email at CEO@WSBlind.org.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sharon Giovinazzo". The signature is written in a cursive style. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

The following guidance is based off the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for “congregate” housing facilities to assist in the prevention of the spread of COVID-19.

People living and working in this type of housing may have challenges with social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19. WSB residents often gather together closely for social, leisure, and recreational activities, shared dining, and/or use of shared equipment, such as dining/café operations, laundry facilities, stairwells, and elevators, additionally WSB staff is in close contact with each other and clients so care must be taken and you are responsible to take precautions in the community to prevent introduction of the Virus to the WSB campus.

State and local public health departments can issue specific regulations on COVID-19 transmission and policies in your community, which can may contradict CDC guidance, WSB leadership closely monitors all regulations but will generally follow CDC and ADH (Arkansas Department of Health) guidelines.

Maintaining Safe Operations

- It is WSB’s leadership’s priority to identify strategies to maintain operations and a healthy working and living environment.
- WSB has implemented flexible sick leave policies. Staff must stay home when sick, without the need to provide documentation from doctors. Flexibility of these policies will, when possible, allow staff to stay home to care for sick family or household members or to care for children in the event of school or childcare dismissals. Employee must request an accommodation in writing and will be approved by CEO.
- Review WSB plans to protect the staff and residents from spread of COVID-19 (See How to Protect Yourself and Others).
- WSB shall clean and disinfect shared areas (such as exercise room, laundry facilities, shared bathrooms, and elevators) and frequently touched surfaces using EPA-registered disinfectants daily. Disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer will be provided in common areas, all residents and staff are encouraged to take responsibility for their own protection and the protection of others.
- Staff and clients are required to follow the guidance and directives on community gatherings from the state of Arkansas, including the wearing of masks in all public areas even during off duty time, the goal is to reduce the risk of exposure for the safety of staff and clients, WSB leadership reserves the right to require self isolation if potential exposure is suspected.
- All visitors will be asked to practice social distancing and stay at least 6 feet apart from others and wear cloth face coverings in any shared spaces, including spaces restricted to staff only.
- WSB has limited the presence of non-essential volunteers and visitors in shared areas. Interns will be allowed on campus after answering CDC questions about exposure and travel and will be required to wear face masks while on campus in common areas and when social distancing cannot be practiced.

- WSB will provide COVID-19 prevention supplies for staff and residents in common areas at our facility, such as soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizers that contain at least 60% alcohol, tissues, trash baskets, and, cloth face coverings when available.
- WSB social worker will help residents understand they can contact their healthcare provider to ask about getting extra necessary medications to have on hand for a longer period of time, or to consider using a mail-order option for medications, as well as, proper protocol for when medical care requires emergency medical services.
- WSB residents are encouraged to seek out a “buddy” in the facility who will check on and help them. It is SOP for instructors to notify staff within seven minutes if a client is not in class and an out of schedule memo has not been sent.

Communication with Staff and Residents

WSB will use the following platforms to communicate changes to policy and procedures:

- Email
- Website
- Text messaging
- Newsletters/Blogs
- Social Media
- Flyers

How to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 in Common Spaces at WSB

- WSB has taken into consideration how you can use multiple strategies to maintain social distance between everyone in common spaces of the facility. This may include restricting visitor under certain circumstances.
- WSB reserves the right to cancel any and all public or non-essential group activities and events at any time.
- WSB will offer alternative methods for activities and social interaction such as participation by phone, online, or through recorded sessions, including sharing our Zoom platform for meetings or communication with friends and family.
- WSB will arrange seating of chairs and tables to be least 6 feet apart during shared meals or other events with visitors. If a visitor leaves the room where the meeting is held or cannot maintain social distancing requirements, WSB staff will require individual to wear a mask. WSB leadership reserves the right to ask a person to leave if directives cannot be followed.
- Food service will only be provided in disposable pre-plated containers with disposable utensils and bottled drinks and will only be distributed by WSB staff or person designated by meeting organizer. No buffets will be allowed even if catered by meeting organizer.
- Only one visitor in the elevator at a time and social distancing measures used when utilizing stairwells.

Shared Bathrooms

- Shared bathrooms will be cleaned regularly using EPA-registered disinfectants, at least twice per day (e.g., in the morning and evening or after times of heavy use).
- Bathrooms shall be continuously stocked with soap and paper towels. Hand sanitizer will also be made available.
- Trash cans are emptied regularly.
- Information on how to wash hands properly, posted for visitors and for new residents TDL will cover proper hand washing protocol.

If a WSB resident has or is suspected to have COVID-19

- Resident will reach out to social worker who can assist client in seeking advice by telephone from a healthcare provider to determine whether medical evaluation is needed.
- Information from CDC will be provided to the ill person with information on how to care for themselves and when to seek medical attention.
- Residents who present with COVID-19 symptoms and their roommates and close contacts will have to self-isolate and use of shared spaces will be restricted.
- Residents will be moved to designated quarantine rooms during this period which can be up to 14 days. All residents will be required to follow all of the WSB guidance in writing or as directed by leadership or housing personnel.
- All new residents admitted will be required to follow all of the WSB guidance in writing or as directed by leadership or housing personnel, including permission to monitor temperature and symptoms and isolation/quarantine protocol for up to 2 weeks. This will include not participating in shared meals. If you are a smoker a separate smoking area will be provided.
- Residents who find it necessary to go to an emergency room will automatically be placed into quarantine rooms for up to 14 days and agree to allow WSB staff to monitor temperature and symptoms during this period of time. This will include not participating in shared meals. If you are a smoker a separate smoking area will be provided.

Accepting New Residents at WSB

Leadership will continuously follow the guidance and directives from the CDC and state and local officials.

WSB is not restricted by the guidance and directives issued by state and local officials at the WSB campus, but will follow CDC guidelines to eliminate, to the best of our ability, the possibility of the spread of COVID or any other infection/virus.

- At check-in, a new resident will be provided with a clean face covering and will be follow above quarantine policies.
- Medical evaluation may be necessary depending on the symptoms.

How to Protect Yourself & Others **Especially those with Severe Underlying Medical Conditions**

Know how COVID-19 spreads

- There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19.
- **The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus.**
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
 - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
 - These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
 - Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Everyone Should Wash Your Hands Often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- It's especially important to wash:
 - Before eating or preparing food
 - Before touching your face
 - After using the restroom
 - After leaving a public place
 - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
 - After handling your cloth face covering
 - After changing a diaper
 - After caring for someone sick
 - After touching animals or pets
- If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.

Avoid Close Contact

- **Inside your home:** Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.
- **Outside your home:** Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who **don't** live in your household.
 - Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.

- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
- Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Cover Your Mouth and Nose with a Cloth Face Cover When Around Others

- You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
- The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- Everyone should wear a cloth face cover in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
 - Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

Cover Coughs and Sneezes

- **Always cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit.
- **Throw used tissues** in the trash.
- Immediately **wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Clean and Disinfect

- **Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.** This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- **If surfaces are dirty, clean them.** Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- **Then, use a household disinfectant.** Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work.

Monitor Your Health Daily

- **Be alert for symptoms.** Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms **of COVID-19.**
 - Especially important if you are running essential errands, going into the office or workplace, and in settings where it may be difficult to keep a physical distance of 6 feet.
- **Take your temperature** if symptoms develop.
 - Don't take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature, like acetaminophen.
 - If your temperature is 100.4 or higher, you need to contact your healthcare provider immediately and not report to work.
- Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Screening Questions for New Admissions

1. **Determine if the client has a fever, by:**

- Taking their temperature using an infrared thermometer,

AND

- Asking “**Have you felt like you had a fever in the past day?**”

2. **Ask the client “Do you have a new or worsening cough today?”**

3. **Ask the client, “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 client has a fever **OR** a new/worsening cough **OR** any of the other symptoms:

1. Provide a cloth face covering for the client to wear over their nose and mouth, if one is available and if the client can tolerate it. If a cloth face covering is not available, advise the client about cough etiquette and provide tissues. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on children younger than 2 years old, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.
2. Notify management and appropriate healthcare providers.
3. Direct the client to an isolation room.
4. Let the client know:
 - If their symptoms worsen, they should notify a member of the WSB staff immediately.
 - They should not leave their room/the designated area, if they do to participate in social distant activities, they should stay at least 6 feet away from others.
 - If they leave their room/the designated area, they must wear a cloth face covering.
 - They should wash their hands often or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

If you believe you have a medical emergency, contact housing staff in order to follow proper protocol for emergencies.

Screening Questions for Guests at WSB During Meetings and Events

This will be updated as the CDC's information on COVID-19 continues to change.

Your health and well-being are of the utmost importance and WSB is taking measures to keep the staff, clients and guests in a safe environment. Therefore, anyone coming into WSB will be screened and part of our screening process will include taking their temperature and asking the following questions.

1. Within the last 14-days, have you experienced a new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
YES
NO
2. Within the last 14-days, have you experienced new shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
YES
NO
3. Within the last 14-days, have you experienced a new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
YES
NO
4. Within the last 14-days, have you experienced new muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition or a specific activity such as physical exercise?
YES
NO
5. Within the last 14-days, have you had a temperature at or above 100.4° or the sense of having a fever?
YES
NO
6. Within the last 14 days, have you had close contact, without the use of appropriate PPE, with someone who is currently sick with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?* (Note: Close contact is defined as within 6 feet for more than 10 consecutive minutes)
YES
NO

If the individual answers YES to any of the questions they will not be allowed into WSB.

Name

Date