



Realm Employee Statement on the Covid-19

March 13/2020

This is the Statement or Memo for All Employees that are working in REALM.

This is meant to be a guideline for how we will go forward as needed and as the presentation of this health concern becomes an emergency or a quarantine.

Our aim is to continue to monitor and stay up to date with the facts as they apply to our Organization and directly to your work assignments.

We will be Communicating through updates, these will be found through email, Realm Employees group and where applicable due to a more public nature on FaceBook and our Web page. We are monitoring the information from the WHO, Health BC, CLBC, and Worksafe BC to ensure that we are current and trying to follow best practices.

Working in the times of Covid-19

As in general day to day work, we are **strongly reminding** everyone to be using all usual best practice regarding universal precautions and good working standard. We stress the need to be more diligent in the following ways:

- **Frequent washing of hands for good hand hygiene.**
- **Use of hand sanitizer for time where washing hands is not available or in between appointments.**
- **Avoid touching eyes, mouth and nose.**
- **If feeling sick, remaining home especially if it is a Respiratory infection that may be accompanied or not by a fever.**
- **If you have travelled to internationally, the WHO, Public Health Canada, WorkSafeBC are suggesting that Self Isolate at home for 14 days.**
- **Support in maintaining cleanliness in the shared spaces.**
- **If you have a underlying medical condition that may make you more susceptible to please ensure that we are aware, if you feel that there is a need to limit your chance of exposure please bring this forward- These conditions include: heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer or suppressed immune systems from medical treatment.**

- Taking good care of your self by taking care of your self by having enough rest, eating a balanced diet, and drinking plenty of fluids.
- If you develop any symptoms that are concerning or are progressing please visit your healthcare advisor and inform us. **If for any reason that you believe that this could be related to Covid-19, Please get assessed and if needed contact Public Health/Interior Health.**
- If this is related to an individual and you consider this an unsafe work site, we need to know so that an investigation and all authorities are alerted. We will support you in this, investigate to see if the person is affected- if the assessment states that there is no alarm you will be asked to return to work with that individual.

Work assignments and Essential Services:

At this moment we will continue with the usual work assignments, considering the information that is happening in the greater Community around us and adjusting accordingly. As we support persons that are considered by **Public Health Canada** as vulnerable it becomes necessary that we do continue to offer supports, while also assessing what is occurring for the persons we serve and responding in the safest manner for both the person and the DSPs involved.

If you have a concern about your current work assignment, please come and discuss this with us so that we can look at how to be responsive. **We will do our best regarding requests and with considerations of medical needs, with this in mind we will need to continue to work with the people that we support who will need guidance through this situation.** Responsive actions to request could look like assignments that minimize exposure to heavily populated areas in the community, changing the nature in which the work is being accomplished with out limiting the service for the individual ie picking up groceries vs going together **Basically we will work together to make plans for people that make sense.**

During this time, it is very important that we consider the persons that we work with and for and their understanding of the situation. We don't want to incite any fear or panic, but it will become needed to give reminders as well as prompts for the same best practices that we are following, this includes those that do live independently. **This may feel unusual if your work has been more Community Inclusive vs Outreach, however this needs to be considered essential to do.** Again we support many persons with differing learning and communication styles, so it becomes an **imperative piece of our work to aid in this. Please be aware of this and feel free work with the team if you are unsure of how to approach.**

If there becomes the need to begin to operate with an Essential Service(do to the Outbreak of the Covid-19 virus in our Community), we will be setting up the essential service schedule for those persons on our Service that are considered Primary (Primary individuals are those that are living on their own/families and need to have support in daily

living such as food preparations, budgeting, grocery shopping general up keep of home and the knowledge of good hygiene practice.

These Primary individual's service needs will be assessed, reviewed and then determined in the planning of the approach. As with other essential service times, you may be meeting and supporting a variety of individuals. If there are any needs that people have currently that we are not aware of like: prescription pick ups, walking for health, regular appointments for health, employment or legal check ins etc, please bring this to our attention so as we are planning the essential plan-we don't leave these type of essentials out. At this moment we are looking at the needs of the person that must happen vs the exact program heading that they fall under.

Every effort will be made to ensure that schedules are developed that will allow for staff to have the opportunity to have as minimal impact on their schedules as we can. On going review and assessments will be made as needed. Good communications and team support will be key.

Secondary Supports- are those supports that are needed for individuals, but these persons are usually supported by others its not our main responsibility to support in ADLS. These supports will as with the Primary group will be looked at as well as reviewed so that the needs of this group are identified and supported. If the main mode of support for this group is through groups- we will look at how to provide contact for this group. **Persons will still have the opportunity for contact and support, but it will look different and maybe less frequent than what they are accustomed to.**

Large groups/Events: These are the extra groups and plans that are put together for a few or many individuals. These events are not necessarily essential in nature. So, in the case of Essential Service we will cancel them. **There may be some large group initiatives put together to support in the sense of Community and getting through this event. This may look like a meal to be offered and shared etc. these will be limited but well planned and offered when needed.**

We will be looking at the long range planning for the Organization and weighing all the considerations as they arise. We will be considering, as other groups and community members have the nature of events and whether we need to reschedule or postpone. If this becomes a consideration we will look to late spring early summer in most cases.

****Our main objective will be to provide service while respecting the Health and Safety of everyone and minimalizing the impact on the wages of people. We will be looking at this in an ongoing fashion and making sure that we are cognizant and responsive.**

We will need to work together to explore the various methods of being able to provide supports that both hold purpose and support for everyone.

What happens if I Choose to Self Isolate or need to Isolate for both my own and others

Protection?

If you have been suggested to stay home, we will need to discuss how to give you some work assignments to reduce the impact on your income. From here after you have used your 8 sick days, we will look to treating your wage packages in a similar fashion as Stat days (using an average). We need to do this as there will still be the need to provide service to individuals. **If your self isolation is due to travelling out of Country for personal reasons, we would not be looking at this option. You could definitely use your sick time that is available, and see if there is work that can be assigned- however this different than our need to assign work due to isolation decisions made due to contact within the Community or body of work.**

It is important to note-LTD programs will not cover the time off for self isolation if you have travelled to a country that has an active advisory.

The Federal Government of Canada is looking at the EI program, so there may be the need to exercise this if you have been required to self exclude and have exhausted your sick days. Again, we will look at trying to make the least amount of impact to you personally, but services to persons served will need to continue.

If you have been told to and are deciding to self isolate, it is necessary for you to be assessed. If it is determined that you are with Covid-19, you will need to disclose this to us as well as the Public Health Authority.

This is a recognized and supported leave; however, it will need to be assessed and documented for appropriate reasons- This is supported by Work Safe BC and Labor Standards Act.

It is not enough to decide that you are isolating as not every cough, sneeze or fever is due to Covid-19. Its suggested to be precautionary when there is the thought of exposure to someone that has been identified.

Going forward, we will begin to look at the things that will need to be reorganized and or changed. We will encourage suggestions and everyone's cooperation in this going forward.

As we make changes, we will be encouraging you to be thinking about what the persons you support will need, please prepared to work collaboratively with us.

