Message from ESWA

Currently ESWA is open and operating under normal business hours. We plan to continue to provide care to our consumers.

In the highest regard to the safety of our consumers and staff, ESWA is requesting all staff to call out if they feel unwell and to adhere to the CDC's recommended preventative measures that help prevent colds and the flu that can protect against other respiratory viruses, including COVID-19.

Our vendors’ staff have been instructed to call all consumers ahead of scheduled visits to screen for any new health concerns or symptoms the consumer may have. If you have a scheduled home visit with an ESWA vendor, please plan to keep this appointment unless you are experiencing symptoms like fever, cough, or shortness of breath. If you are experiencing these symptoms, please call ESWA to cancel your appointment, and call your primary health care provider.

For your protection, ESWA staff will only be performing phone visits during this time, and special distancing protocols have been put in place for the provision of Meals on Wheels.

ESWA is also adhering to the DPH recommendation and informing our consumers at the highest-risk to limit time in public spaces as often as possible until the risk of exposure subsides. ESWA is also taking steps to lessen our staff’s risk by holding virtual meetings in lieu of face to face meetings.

ESWA is coordinating closely with our providers and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. We are actively monitoring virus developments and following guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control.

It is ESWA’s intention to maintain continuity of services during this crisis while upholding public health and protecting our consumers and staff. We hope for no service disruptions, but realistically our community must prepare for a local or regional outbreak which would interrupt daily routines and schedules.

We have included some useful resources in this document to help our consumers get prepared. It is certainly not an exhaustive list, please feel free to contact our Information and Referral Unit or your Case Manager for other specific and personal needs.

Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs) Response to Covid-19

As the coronavirus situation continues to evolve, the safety of our consumers throughout the Commonwealth is at the forefront of our daily operations. Given the rapidly developing nature of the outbreak, we believe that it is important to share the precautions we are taking to help promote the health and safety of our consumers.

We are adhering to all related guidance issued by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We maintain weekly correspondence with the Executive Office of Elder Affairs to streamline communication on best practices as it relates to delivering our home care programs and services.

Continues on next page
Precautions everyone can make to help stop the spreading of germs

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, the Center for Disease Control always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC’s recommendations for using a facemask.
  - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
  - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to 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 large gatherings if you are at higher risk. Includes these groups:
  - Older adults
  - Anyone with underlying health conditions, such as heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes
  - Anyone with weakened immune systems
- Postpone or cancel travel, both international and domestic. As Massachusetts and other communities move from containment to mitigation, any travel poses a risk as groups are travelling into areas with an unknown level of COVID-19 transmission.
How do I plan ahead for COVID-19?

- Make an emergency plan of action with your household members, relatives, and friends.
- Make a list of your emergency contacts—family, friends, neighbors, health care providers, local public health department, and community resources.

Prepare for 10-14 day long quarantines

There are things you can do now to prepare in case a quarantine is warranted if the coronavirus continues to spread. Your Homemaker can assist with purchasing some of these items.

- Household cleaning spray or wipes
- Hand soap and hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- Tissues and toilet paper
- Laundry detergent and dish soap
- A two-week supply of nonperishable food, snacks and water
- Pet food, pet supplies, pet medications
- 30 day supply of Prescription medications
- Vitamins and over-the-counter medications you normally take
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Batteries
- Electronic access to medical records or hard copies from your doctor
- A plan for other family, friends or neighbors that check in on you if you become sick

In the event that you are unable to leave your home, ESWA can connect you with Pharmacies and Grocery Stores that deliver to your door. These resources are also available on our website.

What do I do if COVID-19 starts spreading in my community?

- Stay informed about local COVID-19 activity through the Department of Health website.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick. Don’t share personal items and clean frequently touched surfaces with soap and water.
- If you are sick, stay home. If someone in your house is sick, stay home to avoid unknowingly spreading the virus to others.
- Do not attend large events, such as sporting events, conferences, or other community events.
- Set up a separate room for sick household members. Clean the room regularly. Do not interact with them more than necessary.
- Check in with family and friends who live alone—especially those with chronic diseases. If you live alone, ask your friends and family to check in with you if you become sick.

Need Information? Call ESWA’s I&R Unit

ESWA has compiled a vast number of community resources that may be helpful to our consumers. All resources referrals are tailored to the inquirer’s specific needs, and all information requests are kept confidential. There is no charge for this service. Although this service is primarily offered by phone, we also accept email requests and on site consultations during business hours.

ESWA’s Information Referral Unit:

| Call: 508-756-1545 | Email: irinfo@eswa.org | website: www.eswa.org/contact-us/ |

Meals on Wheels Delivery Precautions and Distancing Protocol

All Meals on Wheels Drivers have put new protocols into place for your protection. Drivers will be wearing a new pair of gloves for each individual delivery, and hand sanitizing in between deliveries. As well Drivers have been instructed to leave the meal hanging on your doorknob, and stepping back a minimum of 6 feet to observe you retrieving your meal. If you do not answer your door, standard no-answer procedures go into effect with follow-up phone call.
Stay up to date! Useful websites and phone numbers

- Elder Services of Worcester Area: [eswa.org](http://eswa.org)  Phone: **508-756-1545**
- Massachusetts 211: [https://mass211.org/](https://mass211.org/)  Phone: **211**
- City of Worcester: [worcesterma.gov/coronavirus](http://worcesterma.gov/coronavirus)
- Local Senior Center/Council on Aging: [mcoaonline.com/what-is-a-coa/coa-directory/](http://mcoaonline.com/what-is-a-coa/coa-directory/)
- The **Disaster Distress Helpline**, **1-800-985-5990**, is a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster, including disease outbreaks like COVID-19. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories.

Disclaimer: This resource comes as a courtesy from Elder Services of Worcester Area. You are hereby notified that Elder Services of Worcester Area does not recommend, guarantee or assume liability for the performance or lack thereof, for any of the resources listed.