



## Keeping Clients Safe

Dear Clients, Families, Volunteers and Friends,

SeniorCare Experts is actively monitoring the progression of the coronavirus, COVID-19, to ensure that we have the most accurate and latest information on the threat of the virus. As you know, this situation continues to develop rapidly as new cases are identified in our communities and our protocols will be adjusted as needed.

While most cases of COVID-19 are mild, causing only fever and cough, a very small percentage of cases become severe and may progress particularly in the elderly and people with underlying medical conditions. Because this is the primary population that SeniorCare Experts serves, we understand your concerns and want to share with you how our organization is responding to the threat of COVID-19.

*First and foremost, safety and protecting health of our clients and volunteers has always been a top priority. We have already been practicing these methods of keeping our clients safe. SeniorCare Experts wants to reassure you of these protective measures.*

**Home Delivered Meals Program: *We are still delivering.***

Masonic Homes Kentucky prepares our meals. Precautions are always in place such as:

- \* The kitchen work stations as well as utensils and packaging containers are clean and sanitized
- \* Food is fresh and prepared to correct temperatures
- \* Food is wrapped and protected
- \* Meal delivery bags are sealed in containers prior to placing in refrigerator unit

- \* Employees not only wash their hands, they wear sanitary gloves
- \* Employees are well – if an employee is ever not feeling well, they are advised to stay at home

### **Meals Delivery**

- \* Our volunteers are placing the meal bag containing the sealed meal on the doorknob or table on porch and not entering the home
- \* The client is then called to let him or her know the meal has arrived. This is limiting contact with our clients
- \* Volunteers have always used precautions as hand sanitizer and hand washing
- \* Volunteers never deliver meals to the elderly if they are not feeling well.

During this time, Masonic Homes has closed their campus to outside visitors. This is to keep their residents and their employees safe.

### **Non-medical Home Care**

As we are following updates and procedures from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) State Department of Health, local and county authorities, the Home Care Association of America and other agencies and resources, we continue to follow these protocols for safety. We will adjust accordingly to any new recommendations from these organizations.

- As a standard practice, we have an emergency preparedness plan in place. We will continue to follow it as this situation evolves or update it accordingly.
- All caregivers follow established protocol regarding staying home when sick. This practice is not new to our staff.
- Communication with caregivers to assess any known risk factors, such as travel to areas with widespread outbreaks or local contact in areas known to have reported cases are ongoing. We will advise them not to report to work if they are deemed high-risk.
- We believe that home remains the safest place for you or your loved one, as indications show that the virus is spread more quickly in facilities and larger group or public settings. Possible exposure will remain the lowest for those who are able to stay in their homes with limited outside contact. For this reason, we feel fortunate to be able to provide care that can keep people at home or limited exposure in group settings through personalized care and support.
- For clients we serve who reside in facilities or other group-type living situations, we

will work closely with the facility on any protocols, exchange of information, or other guidelines as necessary.

- Many of our clients are especially at risk, given they are older adults or have underlying health issues. We are vigilant about our need to help protect these individuals from illness be it the flu, COVID-19, or any other communicable disease. These measures are not new to us as we seek to minimize risk regularly for our clients, regardless of an outbreak such as this new coronavirus.

## **Contingency Planning for You or Your Loved One**

- Depending on the severity of the spread of illness in communities or the response taken by national and state authorities (ex. mandatory isolation, closure of schools, etc.), our staffing levels may be affected. As a result, we may be unable to cover all shifts.

- We will make every effort possible to provide our clients with safe and appropriate care and seek to avoid canceling shifts, however, we cannot guarantee this will not occur given the uncertainties about this situation.

- At all times, regardless of a viral outbreak or other situation, we strongly recommend that our clients have alternative arrangements for the provisions of care in the event we are unable to provide services. We encourage you to begin considering and putting into place back-up plans now, as the severity of the spread of this illness and planned interventions is still uncertain.

## **What You Can Do to Protect Yourself and Your Family**

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.

- Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.

- Eat well, drink lots of water and get rest to strengthen your immune system.

- Have a family emergency preparedness plan that includes care coverage and back up support, if possible.

- Stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill.

- If you have underlying medical issues that put you in the high-risk category, avoid

large public gatherings or other places outside the home. Limit your contact with others.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me. I want to assure you that we are following all the necessary protocol to protect our clients, your loved ones as well as volunteers and staff. I will continue to update you as more information becomes available.

SeniorCare experts has always gone above and beyond for the care we give. This is just another opportunity to reassure you of the values and principals we uphold.

On Behalf of Those We Serve,

*Patty Dissell*

Executive Director

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Please consider supporting SeniorCare Experts during this time. We do not want to turn anyone away in need. [www.srcareexperts.org](http://www.srcareexperts.org)

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