

**People with disabilities may be at risk during COVID-19 due to medical conditions or difficulty following guidelines to protect themselves. Risk assessments have always been in place but you might not have one. Care teams and IRIS consultants may be asking more about your activities. Here are some ways to protect your rights related to these assessments.**

## What is a risk assessment?

- A set of questions to help determine if something you do in your life creates a concern for your health and safety.
- It should be a conversation between you, your family or supporter, and your care team/IRIS consultant.
- **Questions might include:**
  - what is the activity you are doing that is not ok?
  - What additional services and supports might you need to stop or change this activity?
  - What could happen to you if you don't stop the activity?
  - What ways can you work to stop the activity?
  - What if you don't think you can stop the activity and you want to continue?

## Risk assessments might be used during COVID-19 to make plans before you start services again. They will:

- Look at whether you are healthy and could get COVID more easily
- Assess your ability to follow social distancing (6 feet apart from other people), wear a mask, or wash your hands
- Learn if you understand how to keep from getting COVID



## How can I be involved in the risk assessment?

- Have someone you trust with you when talking about risk.
- Ask questions and be sure to tell your care team/IRIS consultant what you want and what you will do about the activity
- If they ask you to sign a form, be sure to read it or have someone read it to you before you sign.
- Get help from an advocate if you are concerned about the form.
- You should be able to receive services even if you have a hard time following the rules during COVID-19. Your provider can help plan to follow the rules such as social distancing (staying 6ft apart from others) wearing a mask, and greater personal care needs.
- Your service provider should not stop you from attending or getting services based on what staff want or if they think it will be hard to support you; this is discrimination.
- Service providers should not make you or your family, guardian, or supporter feel like staying home or refusing services is what is best for you. You and the people who support you should make that decision not on what the provider might think.



- You or your guardian should not sign an agreement that lets the service provider out of their responsibility to keep you safe.
- Your natural supports should not be considered your back up if services or supports are reduced or stopped. A backup plan should be put in place with many different options including paid support.
- Your service provider should plan how they will provide services if your family member needs to go to work. Services should not be stopped because your family cannot be there to help you.
- Your service provider, Care Manager or IRIS Consultant should work with you and your staff at home about how you will get the support you need during the day if you cannot go to work or attend services during the day.
- You should expect regular check-ins with your care team or IRIS consultant. These are to make sure you are safe and have the services you need. They should be offering options for activities and support for you and your caregivers.
- Person-centered planning should be talked about often during the health emergency to assess if there is a need for new goals or services. They should pay attention to changes with your mental health.
- You should be able to continue in the least restrictive service options (the place you chose). You can do things in the community with people who don't have disabilities.
- You have a right to vote including voting by mail. You can get information on voting from your care team, IRIS Consultant or service providers. You can find out about voter registration, absentee voting, and transportation to vote by calling the Disability Rights Voter Hotline at 844-DIS-VOTE (844-347- 8683)
- Your service providers, care team or IRIS Consultant should talk to you about changes in rules and services that might affect you. You should get this information in a way you can understand. (for example reading level, screen readers, translation, or sign language interpretation).
- You and your family should get information quickly about staff or other people in your program or activity get sick with COVID.

## Your Responsibilities

- Before getting services again, you will need to talk to your service provider about the new rules and the accommodations you need.
- You must tell your service provider about any symptoms you have that could be COVID-19. Symptoms can be a cough, a sore throat, a fever, your head hurts, your body hurts, or your stomach hurts or diarrhea.
- You need to tell your service provider if you think you have been around someone with COVID.
- You need to wear a mask, stay six feet or more away from people, and wash your hands a lot when you leave your home.
- Speak up if you need help. Let your service provider, care team or IRIS consultant know if you need more help. Your caregivers or family should also ask for more help if they need it.
- Ask for things to be explained in a way that you understand. If you do not understand tell the person.

