

NY Guidance Letter to Substance Use Providers:

Dear Provider,

The NYS Department of Health (NYS DOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continue to issue health advisories and interim guidance on the COVID-19 outbreak caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. It is expected that guidance, recommendations, and risk criteria will continue to evolve, and it is therefore important that providers stay updated with the most current information, as the clinical criteria for a person under investigation (PUI) and exposure risk levels for health care providers are subject to change.

It is recommended that all providers:

- Print and visibly post the [NYS DOH Attention all Patients and Attention all Visitors Signs](#).
- Monitor for travel updates on the [CDC Evaluating and Reporting PUI Geographic Areas and Sustained Transmission website](#).

Providers should use clinical judgement when evaluating patients for suspected COVID-19. Anyone who may meet COVID-19 risk criteria and may be a PUI should first be immediately isolated, in a room with a closed door if possible, and should have a mask placed over their nose and mouth in order to reduce respiratory droplet exposure. Before evaluating anyone with possible COVID-19, provider staff should use the appropriate personal protective equipment, including a respirator mask, eye protection, gloves, and a gown if available. Before referring patients to another location, providers should consult with their [Local Health Department \(LDOH\) and referral source](#). [However, if a provider evaluating a possible PUI is unable to immediately reach their LDOH or the NYS DOH for further guidance, they should have a low threshold for arranging transport to a local hospital for further evaluation.](#)

Staff who fall into the high-or-medium risk exposure category for COVID-19 per CDC guidance, due to recent travel history to an affected geographic area and/or exposure to known COVID-19 cases, or who are exhibiting any symptoms of possible COVID-19, should not report to work in any healthcare setting until cleared to do so by the LDOH or NYS DOH, as they may need to undergo a period of self-isolation and monitoring. Please see the following guidance from the CDC:

- [Interim U.S. Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure in a Healthcare Setting to Patients with Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)

Providers who have questions about this information can contact their LDOH or the NYS DOH Bureau of Communicable Disease control at 518-473-4439 during business hours or 1-866-881-2809 evenings, weekends, and holidays.

Additional information and links can be found here:

- [NYS DOH Health Advisory: Identification and Testing of COVID-19 Persons Under Investigation](#)
- [CDC Health Update 2.28.2020: Update and Interim Guidance on Outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)

Please share this with your staff.

The Office of the Chief Medical Officer

New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports