

Aleutian Housing Authority and COVID-19 Preparations, Guidance, and Information

In an effort to maintain a professional and safe environment for our staff and their families, AHA is enforcing a wellness protocol. This protocol will evolve as necessary and is based on guidance from Alaska's Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The basic rules of this wellness action are below.



Wellness Protocol

- Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds after using the restroom, before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Follow the signs.
- Use the recommended method for handling sneezing and coughing by using a tissue, or sneezing/coughing into your sleeve or elbow. Do not use your hands.
- If washing your hands isn't an option, use hand sanitizer. Hand washing is the preferred method.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular cleaning spray or wipe.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- If you are sick, stay home.
- If a member of your household is sick, stay home.
- If you are at work and showing signs of illness you will be asked to go home (fever, breathing issues, coughing, sneezing, or runny nose).
- Employees who experience a fever will be required to stay home. You may return to work when you no longer have a fever without the aid of medicines for over 24 hours.
- If you start to feel ill while at work, go home.
- Maintain a 6 foot distance between team members exhibiting signs of illness.

We have taken additional precautions by beefing up our cleaning strategy to include daily cleaning of all commonly used surfaces such as office doors, bathroom stalls, and handrails. We all have the responsibility to keep our work areas clean and practice good hygiene protocols. AHA has stocked up on items such as hand soap, available hand sanitizer, cleaning sprays and wipes, please use them.

Continuity of Operations Plan

Also as discussed, we are working on AHA's continuity of operations plan in preparation for high levels of absenteeism. This plan will provide resources, procedures, and processes to protect our employees and families while ensuring we can meet our operational and customer service needs. Items we are reviewing and considering:

Leave Policy

If AHA team members need to remain home due to extended illness or as a result of a quarantine order, AHA will handle leave on a case by case basis. AHA's goal is to be as flexible as we can to accommodate any leave as a result of COVID-19. We are currently reviewing flexible work schedules, staggered shifts, and teleworking. When specific guidelines are established we will share this with you.

NOTE: Other options may soon be available to affected workers. The States Epidemiology and Labor Departments are investigating the possibility of interim financial assistance for affected workers. We are keeping track of these discussions and will update our team members as information becomes available and as need arises.

Departments

We have started reviewing software and hardware that AHA team members can use if it becomes necessary to implement differing work solutions. We will work with each department to incorporate ideas, processes, and procedures as part of this plan. We will start testing these processes to make sure that, when rolled out, they will work and meet our needs. Your suggestions and help during this process will be a necessary part of structuring AHA's continuity plan that will work for our organization and clients. We will share the details when this plan is complete.

Regional Concerns

Any plan will incorporate processes and procedures so our regional members continue to receive the best customer service and access to AHA team members. This will include maintaining communications via phone and email. The continuation of housing applications and payment processing for clients, personnel, and vendors. As part of this process we will work with our regional partners to ensure that (1) they know what our plan is; (2) what and how this might impact services we can provide during a high rate of absenteeism of office and field crews.

Facility Notification and Preparation for Residents and Staff

We will also be working on information materials to distribute and communicate with residents at all our facilities to maintain consistency in information shared. We will finalize plans and cleaning materials to address how our staff will be maintaining common areas to reduce the potential for infection or transmission of the virus at all our facilities.

Useful Links

Below are useful links to guidance and information relating to health issues in the State of Alaska as well as links to the Centers for Disease Control with attention on the Coronavirus. Please take time to review this information as it pertains to you, your families, and your AHA team members.

1. [State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services \(DHSS\)](#)
 - a. [Sign-up for DHSS Alerts](#)
 - b. [Learn more about 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Stay informed: [Subscribe to DHSS Press Releases and Newsletters](#)
[Subscribe to Alaska Public Health Alert Notices](#)
[DHSS Press Releases](#)

2. [Centers for Disease Control – Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(CDC\)](#)
 - a. [What You Should Know about COVID-19](#)
 - b. [Situation Updates](#)
 - c. [Information for Businesses](#)
 - d. [Information for Travel](#)

Stay Informed: [Subscribe to CDC Email and Test Messages](#)

We hope by sharing this information, implementing a wellness policy, and instituting basic hygiene protocols we can keep our team members and families safe while providing services to our regional members, clients.

Working together in partnership, we will be able to handle necessary changes in our operations with professionalism while maintaining our customer service goals.

