# Weekly Q/A on COVID-19:
## For disability service providers

**When will the FSCD interim policies expire?**

The FSCD interim policies will be in place until they are rescinded by the FSCD Statutory Director.

Community and Social Services is monitoring relaunch activities implemented by other programs and ministries – like the re-opening of day cares and summer camps – and reviewing FSCD policies to identify possible solutions to support families accessing the FSCD program.

**How much notice will FSCD families be given before the interim policies expire and what can families expect when they do expire?**

Families should remain in contact with their caseworkers for updates as we transition out of the State of Public Health Emergency.

**Are staff required to use full PPE while working with asymptomatic people who are isolating for 14 days?**

Yes. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is required when in close contact with an isolated individual regardless of symptoms. This requirement is detailed on page 18 of Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) Order 23-2020. PPE includes gowns, facial protection and gloves.

**Are individuals who live in SLALA licensed group homes and care homes allowed to leave their homes for outings?**

Yes. Individuals who are not isolating for 14 days are able to leave their homes for outings. However, individuals are encouraged to stay on the property for their own safety. A letter from the CMOH was provided to families to explain the benefits of physical distancing and limiting outside exposure. Operators should provide this information to families and let them make their own decisions.

If individuals choose to leave the property for an outing, they should follow the CMOH's guidelines on pages 24-25 of Order 23-2020, including physical distancing, wearing a mask and hand hygiene.

**Should individuals be isolated for 14 days if they leave the SLALA licensed group/care home and can't, or don't, follow social-distancing guidelines while they're away?**

Individuals must be screened using the resident questionnaire when they return from an outing. Isolation should be based on the results of the screening or the table on Page 12 of CMOH Order 23-2020.

**Should individuals be isolated for 14 days if they leave the SLALA licensed group/care home for more than 24 hours?**

Yes. Individuals who return from an absence of 24 hours or more are required to isolate for 14 days (see page 12 of CMOH Order 23-2020).

The incubation period for COVID-19 is 14 days. Individuals can be contagious and spread the virus during the incubation period even if they are not showing symptoms.

**Can a small group home isolate as a cohort (e.g. 3-4 residents plus staff)?**

Group homes within the scope of CMOH Order 23-2020 are required to maintain distance between the individuals at all times, including when using shared spaces like dining rooms. CSS cannot provide guidance for group homes that don't fall under this order, but this guidance document may be helpful.

**What happens if an individual does not comply with the isolation request?**

Individuals may decline isolation for various reasons. The reason they have for refusing will likely dictate the approach taken to handle the situation. Group-home operators have a responsibility to protect their staff and all the individuals in their care. Consulting with local public health staff may help you generate some solutions.

For individuals with developmental disabilities, page 35 of CMOH Order 23-2020 offers some helpful suggestions:
- Recognize the individual's ability to interpret the environment, as well as their history. Individuals may be frightened by people in masks/PPE or resist wearing PPE themselves.
- Staff must make every effort possible to protect themselves and the individuals they work with in an appropriate and supportive manner.

**Is there any other guidance to help service providers?**

You may also find Alberta Health's *Operational and Outbreak Standards for Licensed Supportive Living and Long-Term Care* FAQs helpful.