

March 28, 2020

Hello PDD Families,

The ministry of Community and Social Services (CSS) is reaching out to you because we know the COVID-19 pandemic situation is an extremely challenging time for all Albertans and we know every family in Alberta is facing unforeseen pressures related to accessing community services such as day care and recreation, purchasing household necessities, and remaining connected to family and friends. Regardless of who you are or where you live, COVID-19 is affecting all Albertans practically, financially and emotionally. CSS knows that the current situation can be particularly hard on families who rely on our programs and services for support, and we want you to know we are committed to maintaining CSS programs and services during the COVID-19 pandemic, within the context of our current reality.

Please be assured that during the COVID-19 pandemic, CSS staff will continue to administer PDD Family Managed Service (FMS) agreements as per usual practice and including the renewal of existing agreements. We encourage you to remain in regular phone and on-line contact with your PDD worker to address any concerns you may have (in-person meetings are paused until further notice as per public health social distancing directives).

We recognize the current COVID-19 pandemic situation may affect the availability of services you typically access through your PDD FMS agreement and we have directed PDD staff to be flexible in supporting you to meet your needs specific to the COVID-19 pandemic and within your existing agreement. For example, if you are having difficulty maintaining staff to support your family member's needs during this challenging time and are therefore under-utilizing your staffing dollars; please connect with your PDD worker to explore possibilities for using this budget line to access other supports.

We are tracking the administrative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic so please record the things you are doing within your agreement that are specific to COVID-19, and remember to inform your PDD worker about each one. We want to track pandemic costs to inform future emergency planning and to help ensure that any impacts to your current agreement that are specific to the COVID-19 pandemic do not unfairly impact future agreements. Our staff will continue to support your family as best we can during this challenging time.

Please note we are in daily discussions with Inclusion Alberta and the Alberta Council for Disability Services to monitor the impact the COVID-19 situation is having on Albertans with disabilities and their families. We also have a weekly teleconference with the PDD Service Provider Partnership Committee to discuss COVID-19 related service delivery challenges. These conversations are informing the management of our disability programs during this pandemic crisis.

Remember, the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 is available on line at www.alberta.ca.

Sincerely,

John Stinson, Assistant Deputy Minister
Program Policy and Improvement, Community and Social Services

Jason Chance, Assistant Deputy Minister
Delivery Services, Community and Social Services