



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

# ODP Individual Transition Guide



# Why are we thinking about transition?

# Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Individual Transition Guide ODP Announcement 20-056

- Identification of core areas
- Questions to consider within each core area
- Guidance – broken into three levels, depending upon response to questions
- Resources for team to consider

- Begin using the ITG during weekly well-being check ins
- Begin discussions regardless of phase (yellow or red)
- Consider if the individual is ready to discuss transition
- The ITG is a guide and results of the conversation should be ongoing and documented in a service note
- Engage the individual and the team

- Desire to Return to Community Activities and Settings
- Physical Health Status
- Infection Control Measures
- Mental Health and Behavioral Health Needs
- Changes in Routine
- Conditions of Supports and Services

## 1. Desire to return to community activities and settings



### Examples of questions:

- Are you able to do the things you like doing before the stay at home order went into effect?
- How would you like to spend your day?

Guidance based on: If the individual has a desire to return to community activities, or they are unsure and/or have some anxiety about returning to community activities, or they are unwilling or have significant anxiety about returning to community activities.

The individual's response informs the next steps.

## 2. Physical Health Status



Examples of questions:

- How do you feel physically?
- Do you have any signs/symptoms of COVID-19?

Guidance based on: If the individual has fully recovered or has no symptoms of COVID-19 and is able to report or has someone who can, and has no physical health issues, or symptoms other than fever and is not able to report or is having some physical health issues, or has active/confirmed COVID-19 or high-risk health conditions.

The individual's health status informs the next steps.

## 3. Infection Control Measures



Examples of questions:

- Are you washing your hands frequently?
- So you have a mask and are you able to wear it to go out for activities?

Guidance based on: If the individual is able to independently practice hand washing/social distancing/mask wearing, coughing or sneezing into their elbow, or they are inconsistent with these practices, or they are not able or unwilling to practice them.

The individual's abilities informs the next steps.

## 4. Mental & Behavioral Health Needs



Examples of questions:

- Have you acquired new skills to help you deal with COVID-19?
- Have you experienced any stress, isolation, death of a loved one, other trauma?

Guidance based on: The individual feels safe and has supports to deal with current MH/behavioral concerns, or the they feel unsafe and don't have enough support or skills to deal with concerns, or they are experiencing crisis.

The individual's situation informs the next steps.

## 5. Changes in Routine

Examples of questions:

- How are you spending your day since the stay at home order has been in place?
- Have you created new routines in your day you would like to maintain?

Guidance based on: If the individual's routine aligns with transition, or they need to adjust their routine to align with transition, or they current daily routine is in misalignment with their routine following transition.

The individual's response informs the next steps.

## 6. Conditions of Supports and Services



Examples of questions:

- How have you been receiving services during the stay at home order?
- How would you like to receive supports moving forward?

Guidance based on: If the individual does not want any changes to their current supports or services after the stay at home order is lifted, or needs some changes, or needs significant changes to their supports and services after the stay at home order is lifted.

The individual's response dictates the next steps.



# WAID *in* PA

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# WAID in PA

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## Wearing a Mask

While we don't know all the rules that will be in place when people can start going back into the community, there is a good chance that people will be asked to wear masks in certain places. Some individuals may be comfortable wearing masks, while others may need help and support in learning how to tolerate wearing a mask in order to go out. This resource provides information on ways to talk to individuals about wearing a mask.



### UNDERSTANDING WHY WE NEED TO WEAR MASKS

Individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism will have different reactions to wearing masks. Depending on the individuals need, you may need to use different ways to help them understand and use masks when in the community.

You can say things like:

- Masks keep you safe and keep others safe.
- Everyone if getting used to wearing masks and they may not be the most comfortable but it keeps us safe and healthy.

Getting individuals to understand why they need to wear a mask is an important first step in getting them to follow the rules around wearing masks. If you work with someone who is "rule based" or a "rule follower" it may help to tell them that this is a new rule that we need to follow. You may need to use visual aides to help explain why masks are important (to be developed). This can be in the form of social stories, videos, or graphics. Use whatever methods work best for the individuals learning style. If you're not sure, try a few different options to help explain the concepts.



PAautism.org

Pennsylvania's leading source of autism-related resources and information  
877-331-4244

The ASERT Collaborative is funded by the Office of Developmental Programs, PA Department of Human Services.

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## Wearing a Mask

### ASSESSING COMFORT WITH A MASK

Another important step is determining if the individual is comfortable with wearing masks. Some individuals may have no issues with this, while others may struggle. Finding out how comfortable the person is with masks will help you figure out what skills you may need to work on, and where to start that process.

Some things to consider:

- Is the person okay with you (and others) wearing a mask around them?
- Will they hold/touch a mask?
- Will they hold a mask up to their nose/mouth?
- Will they put a mask on, even if just for a few seconds?
- Do they wear a mask for longer periods of time with no problems?

If possible, provide the person you support with a few options of material, style, color of mask. Letting a person choose the style, color, or type of material may help them feel a sense of control over the situation and make them more willing to try and wear the mask. Access to different styles or fabrics may be limited, but do your best to offer options when possible.

If you have options that are all non-preferred, try to help the individual get rid of the ones they like the least, in order to find the best one. Some people find that elastic around their ears is uncomfortable, so a tied mask, or an additional tie that can hold the loops around the head, instead of ears, may be more comfortable. Some fabrics may also be more or less comfortable to breathe through.

### GETTING MORE COMFORTABLE

It may be a gradual process for some individuals to get comfortable with wearing a mask. For some individuals, they may never be comfortable wearing a mask, and that's okay too. The important thing is to try and work with each individual to become more comfortable at their own pace and as much as they're capable.

For individuals who have a harder time tolerating a mask, make sure that the process of getting them more comfortable is never negative. Keep the sessions short, and make sure to end on a positive note. If you see the individual getting frustrated or upset, be sure to stop before any challenging behavior occurs, and provide lots of praise to the individual for what they were able to do, or even for just trying. Some individuals may need frequent, short sessions to start getting more comfortable.

As the person gets more comfortable with putting on a mask, and wearing it for longer periods of time, try wearing it in different places. Take a short walk outside or go for a drive. Individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism sometimes have a hard time generalizing skills to different places, so getting them comfortable wearing a mask in different places will help them once they can go back into the community.



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WEARING A MASK

Because of coronavirus, I need to wear a mask when I go places.



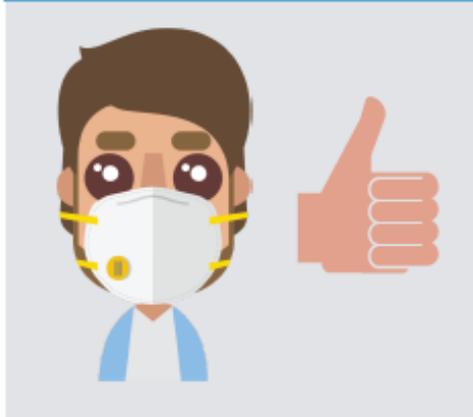
People in my family, neighborhood, and community are wearing masks.



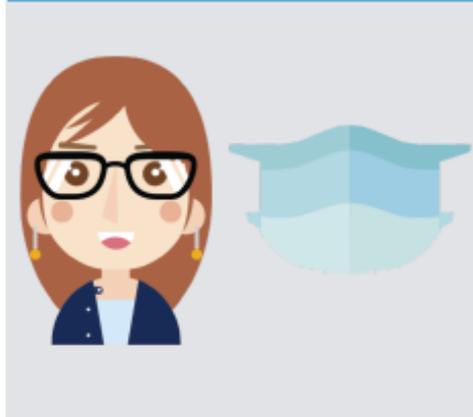
My mask keeps me safe.



Your mask keeps me safe.



I need to wear a mask even if I feel healthy.



It is important to wear a mask every time I leave the house.



- Use the ITG to incite discussion with teams
- Use information gathered in these areas to:
  - inform ISP revisions and,
  - ultimately, the work that providers, families, and individuals are doing to ensure people are prepared to re-integrate

Pay particular attention to...

- Goals and skills
- New skills to capitalize on
- Exposure
- New routines & activities
- Instructional Strategies



# Questions?