

## Facility Based Community Participation Supports Adjustments for COVID-19

Growers returning to the Farm program will experience some new situations here at Hope Springs Farm. We have carefully assessed our facilities and our ability to keep the Growers and staff safe while participating in activities here at the Farm. We have summarized the key issues below, and more specific information about all the criteria we considered and assessed can be found in our [ODP Facility CPS Readiness Tool for COVID-19](#).

We will begin scheduling Team meetings for Growers who are interested in returning to the Farm-based program. Even if Growers are interested in just one day or a couple days a week. Growers and their support Teams and Families can call us at 717-298-1845 to let us know you are ready to schedule a Team Transition Meeting to return to Hope Springs Farm.

First of all, there will be very limited available slots at first. Initially we will only have a maximum of 12 Growers here on the Farm in 4 groups of 3, support staffing will be 1:3, or 1:1 where needed. We will try to maintain Grower cohorts as much as possible, but with only 12 slots available each day the Growers attending each day will change. For example some Growers might attend 2 or 3 days while others might only attend 1 day. Each group will have an assigned indoor space each day for rest periods, bathrooms and in case of inclement weather, including excessive heat.

We are also shortening our days; 5 hours per day instead of our previous 6 hours. Since Growers won't be going out in the community for outings from the Farm, and the majority of the activities will be conducted outdoors we feel a shorter day might be best. Our new program times will be 9:30 am to 2:30 pm each day. Also the groups of Growers won't interact very much with the other groups during the day, as we try to minimize their exposure to others. Groups also will not rotate through the program areas during the day. For example, the group assigned to the Program Building Craft Room as their indoor space, won't use the Program Building Kitchen for activities that day.

Lunch will look a little closer to what the Growers are used to. We will have lunch outdoors; weather permitting. Each group will stay together in their cohort, and remain appropriately distant from the other groups. Within the groups, staff will use the choking protocols established for each Grower to safeguard them while they eat lunch. These choking protocols might not always meet the prescribed social distancing requirements for not wearing masks, but the choking protocols take precedence for obvious health and safety reasons. Some Growers require staff to sit right next to them or right across from them while they eat.

Activities on the Farm will be familiar, but they will be in much smaller groups. As the weather heats up during the summer we will also need more frequent breaks from the outdoor activities, so they will use their assigned indoor spaces that will maintain hygiene and reduce exposure to other Growers during the day. For example, each group will be assigned an animal care chore in the morning and the end of the day. Then they might have a garden chore, or a pasture chore, or even a barn chore. There will be opportunities all day or lots of breaks and

even games. At the end of every day all the indoor spaces used by the Growers and staff will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected to prepare for the next day's group of Growers. We will be following the guidance provided by the CDC, PA DOH, and ODP to maintain all the program areas for the health and safety of the Growers and staff. The CDC Guidance can be found at : [Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities](#), [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#), [Cleaning and Disinfection for Non-emergency Transport Vehicles](#) for Community Program. DOH Guidance: [Help Stop the Spread](#), and ODP Guidance: [ODP Announcement 20-072: Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Home and Community Based Services At-a-Glance Reopening Guide by Phase](#), and [Reissuing Guidance on Masks, Screening, and Handwashing](#)

Masks will be worn by staff when they are working with Growers or other staff members. We would like all the Growers to wear masks while participating in the activities, but we know this might not be realistic for every one of our Growers. So this must be a consideration for all our Growers thinking about returning to the Farm. To help the Growers, we will teach them about social distancing and when and where they should wear masks. We will also provide them with plenty of breaks from wearing masks by teaching them how to social distance appropriately so they can remove their mask for a break.

Screening of the staff will continue daily prior to starting work. In the community program we have asked families and residential staff to pre-screen Growers before sending them out the door. We would like to continue that for the Farm-based program, but we will also screen all the Growers as they arrive at the Farm. We will take their temperature (with no-touch thermometers) and ask them if they feel sick, or if they have anyone at home who is sick. If their temperature is equal to or higher than 100 degrees, we will send them back home. If they answer either of the questions with a "Yes" we will contact families or residential staff to confirm their answers before we send them back home. In any case, we will contact you with the appropriate quarantining protocols for the Grower. More detailed information is available from ODP at: [Reissuing Guidance on Masks, Screening, and Handwashing](#) (bottom of page 3).

If any of the Growers or staff are positively diagnosed with COVID-19, we will temporarily suspend all operations except the Zoom Farm Parties, until we can track and trace the exposure and risk to the rest of the Growers and staff. All families and Residential staff will be immediately notified. We will internally report all cases to ODP and the Counties according to ODP Announcements: [20-049 UPDATE: Reporting Cases of COVID-19 and Requesting Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#), and [20-065: Clarification Reporting Cases of COVID-19](#)

If the Governor moves Dauphin County back to Yellow Phase from Green, the Farm-based program will be suspended until we again move back into Green Phase. If the Governor moves Dauphin County back to the Red Phase, all community programs will be suspended except the Zoom Farm Parties.

More detailed information about the Governor's Phased reopening of Home and Community Based Services is available from ODP at: [ODP HCBS At-A-Glance Reopening Guide by Phase](#)