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***Information, Referral, Education, Supported Employment and***

***Rehabilitation Services Serving Central and Eastern Massachusetts***

Date: March 16, 2020

Dear ASA Individuals, Staff, Families and Guardians,

Last week, Governor Baker declared a State of Emergency for The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic. The Coronavirus has been an ever-evolving situation and precautions to limit exposure are significant. It is difficult for ASA to ensure that a person has not been exposed to COVID -19. However, ASA has been monitoring the health of our individuals and staff. We have been implementing strategies for preventing the spread of the virus including: universal precautions (masks, gloves, washing hands and etc.), cleaning surfaces that are frequently touched (tables, chairs, door knobs, faucets and etc.) throughout the day and all transport vehicles. This is an ongoing process and has and will continue to limit our supplies.

Last week, ASA received some individuals who presented ill (with the signs that CDC recommends for them to remain at home). We isolated the individuals and made calls to have each person picked up. We currently do not have any confirmed cases.

In general, we are all to distance ourselves from each other in hopes to slow down the spread of the virus. We have tried to educate on social distancing, but as you all know this is a difficult concept in both our locations. Based on the Governor’s order of no more than 25 people in a group it becomes even harder for ASA to keep its door open let alone having people be 6 feet apart with social distancing, more so in transport. In the spirit of social responsibility, we feel it is crucial that we stay home to minimize any possible spreading of the virus.

The guidelines tell us any person who is over 60, has diabetes, lung or heart issues should not be attending the program and yet they are being served by ASA. In our review and part of our responsibility is ensure the health and safety of our employees and the persons we provide services to ASA. ASA will follow all the recommendations outlined by DPH, CDC, WHO and DDS.

For these reasons, ASA will close the program from March 17 through March 31, 2020. It was not an easy decision to make, but ASA’s opinion is that it is in everyone’s best interest that we do close for 14 days.

I will continue to monitor the situation and when indicated contact you with any further information.

Please visit the following site for the latest information: massgov/covid19.

Thank you for your understanding and I hope everyone continues to stay healthy.