

COVID-19 Update:

All COVID-19 measures have been extended to June 2nd

May 22, 2020

Over the past two months, Community Living Oshawa/Clarington (CLOC) has taken rapid and necessary steps to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these changes came about as a result of information that has been updated or amended by the Province, health officials and our public health authorities as we have adapted to the crisis. CLOC has been providing the community with updates, telephone calls, Zoom town halls, conference calls and information on our website and social media.

Last week, the provincial legislature voted to extend the Emergency Declaration, extending emergency measures related to the crisis to June 2, 2020. **Today, CLOC is extending its own closures/service suspensions and other COVID-19 measures to June 2, to align with the provincial timeline.**

This extension is essential to ensuring the continued safety of both the people CLOC supports and our employees. Despite our national, provincial, and local progress in flattening the curve, daily news reports confirm that the fight is far from over. This is especially true in congregate living settings, such as group homes and long-term care homes. So far, with measures that have been put in place by CLOC over the past two months, along with the hard work of our staff, we have managed to keep COVID-19 out of most of our sites, while continuing to keep people as safe as possible.

Group Homes

We have realigned our work to focus all of our efforts on keeping the people we support and our staff safe from COVID-19. Active screening measures are in place in all CLOC locations, and staff have been asked to limit their employment in the vulnerable sector to CLOC. Home and family visits have been suspended until further notice to limit the possibility of spreading

COVID-19 through movement in-and-out of residential locations.

Day Programs

Day programs across CLOC, along with activities at The Clarington Project, were suspended in March in accordance with Public Health guidance around physical distancing and limiting trips outside the home to essential needs only. This measure is extended until further notice.

Respite

CLOC's children's respite program had been suspended in February to respond to an internal housing crisis, and will remain closed to respite until further notice. We continue to work with respite families on alternate supports and respite options, and communicate with our community partners regarding any possible supports that we can offer to families once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

CLOC Offices

CLOC has taken steps to significantly limit the number of people entering our administrative offices at 39/43 Wellington Avenue, 947 Adelaide Avenue, and The Clarington Project. Only essential staff are permitted entry to our offices, and anyone entering must wear a mask and be actively screened before proceeding into the building. Physical distancing is practiced fully in all locations. All meetings are taking place virtually at this time. All in-person training remains suspended across the agency. These measures will remain in effect until further notice.

Children's Services, Support Services, Associate Family Living and Supported Independent Living (SIL)

Many individuals supported or affiliated with CLOC live independently in the community, or with their families, and receive some services from CLOC. We have recommended that people living independently take measures to limit the number of visitors entering their homes, limit visits outside of their homes, and that they practice physical distancing as much as possible. PPE is provided to people receiving supports, and to staff, during face to face visits where physical distancing is not possible. Support staff also are providing access to service by conducting telephone and virtual 'visits'.

Employment Supports

As much as possible, our employment supports continue to match individuals seeking work. We continue to support individuals who are working in a CLOC-facilitated placement with making appropriate decisions about transportation and personal protective equipment (PPE) while they are at work.

Dewey's Café

Business at Dewey's Café, CLOC's job training social enterprise located inside the Bowmanville Public Library, is suspended, in accordance with the guidelines of the Municipality of Clarington.

Events Across CLOC

On the advice of Public Health authorities and in compliance with City restrictions on gatherings and permitted events, we have cancelled all events across the organization until further notice.

Offerings

We are working hard every day to develop resources to help ease the pain of social isolation during the pandemic. CLOC's employees are working diligently to keep people busy with daily calendars, neighbourhood walks, leisurely drives, crafts, garden planting, cooking, baking, games and more! Beyond these measures, we have been ensuring that people keep in touch with family and friends via technology, telephone calls, and window or driveway visits. Please contact your supervisor if you need assistance to arrange phone calls, ZOOM chats, or other virtual connections with your family member.

The decision to extend the measures above was not taken lightly. Many families have expressed how difficult it is to not visit their loved ones. We know this was especially difficult over the Easter and Mother's Day weekends. CLOC assures you that we are extending these measures under the guidance of public health authorities, in an effort to keep your loved ones, and CLOC's employees, safe.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact CLOC's COVID-19 hotline at 905-576-3011 x 385. Please leave a message outlining your question, and it will be directed to the most appropriate person to respond.