

# TELE-WORK GUIDANCE FOR THE IL UNIT

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ADAPTED FROM AMANDA GERSON, TELE-WORK GUIDANCE FOR THE VR UNIT

# ADJUSTING TO OUR “NEW NORMAL”

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Thank you everyone for your flexibility and understanding during this unique time!

While many of us are used to working from the field, we acknowledge that full-time teleworking is a new experience for most of us. Face-to-Face contact with consumers is suspended due to the Social Distancing policy, implemented to slow the spread of COVID-19, which drastically changes our direct service provision.

As such, this document outlines how you should proceed with providing services remotely, some priorities, tips, and resources for accomplishing your work, as well as other tasks to focus on, that can be receiving enhanced focus right now.

I expect to share additional resources and guidance as we navigate this new process... I also welcome any tips and resources that you may have. Let's stay in touch!!



# THERE IS AN UPSIDE!

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- Tele-working means that staff have more time to complete work, as they will not be spending time traveling between field appointments.
- This “found” time will allow us to work on the necessary work tasks that we may have fallen behind on:
  - Caseload management
  - Documentation
  - Professional Development
  - Data clean-up
  - Designing new discipline specific assessments

# IDEAS FOR CONTINUING CONSUMER SERVICES VIRTUALLY

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- Schedule virtual sessions with your consumers
  - Reach out to consumer to schedule a phone-based session
  - Plan what you will be reviewing with your consumer, and share the intent with them so that they can be prepared to discuss
  - Ask the consumer how they are doing and what they might want to discuss, learn so that you can adapt your lessons.
- Review consumers' progress with on-going services or training
  - Review the latest reports available, and request any updated needed reports (financial information and eye reports should be updated yearly) if necessary
  - Discuss alternative options for services that may be suspended during this time (practicing existing skills, free online resources to advance their current skills, etc.)

# MORE CONSUMER-ORIENTED IDEAS...

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- Review the consumers' Individualized Service Plan with them, and update the document
  - Identify any goals/objectives that are completed or no longer relevant
  - Add any new services that may be necessary moving forward
- Discuss any upcoming programs that they may be appropriate for once they resume: ASPIRE, LEAP, GIVE, & SHORE (in September)

# CASE MANAGEMENT TASKS

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- Verify that all consumer contact information is up to date, including email address; remove any old contact information
- Work with consumer to obtain any documentation that is required.
- Reach out to vendors to obtain outstanding invoices, and certify for payment
- Cancel any old authorizations that are no longer needed
- Close any consumers eligible for closure
- Do a self caseload review.

# GET TO KNOW SOME USEFUL PDQS

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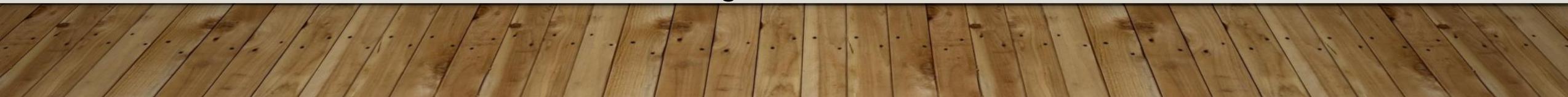
- View Authorizations Not Certified for Payment – Shows approved authorizations with a remaining balance to be paid. Selecting a record will open the authorization.
- View Unpaid line items - This will give you a list of line items on authorizations that have not been paid. Selecting a record will open the authorization that the line item is a part of.
- IL or ILOB Clients with No Progress Report Work Done in the Past X Days -Shows IL clients that have not had a progress note updated in a user-specified number of days. When using the parameters use 91 as the number of days
- IL or ILOB Action Alert List – This will give you a list, grouped by status, of all clients that require action based on the length of time that client has been in that status. By selecting the client, you can access the ECF.
- Please note that IL and ILOB PDQ's are separated out.

# ENGAGE IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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- Take advantage of free online webinars (live and recorded)
- Catch up on research and best practices in the IL world
- Build your skills by learning about ways to motivate and assist consumers in meeting their goals
- Search online and learn more about the resources available in your coverage area that may assist consumers and please share with us all.
- Complete your mandatory online trainings

\*\*\* See slides at the end for online training resources\*\*\*



# CHALLENGES & TEMPORARY SOLUTIONS

SOME ASPECTS OF TELE-WORK WILL MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO CONTINUE SOME OF OUR STANDARD PROCEDURES – HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO WHILE WE'RE IN THIS UNIQUE SITUATION:

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Required consumer signatures – document the situation in a case note (i.e. “due to the social distancing policies resulting from the COVID-19 prevention plan...”)

- If they have access to technology, have them review the documents on their computer or mobile device, and reply back to you in an email that they agree with and wish to sign the document, then upload that email into the casefile
  - If really savvy, have them drop a digital signature using Adobe, or print/sign/scan and email document or signature page back to you, which you can upload to the casefile
- If they do not have access to do that, review the document over the phone and obtain verbal confirmation and document the conversation in the casefile.
- Obtain necessary signatures when things have returned to normal.

# CHALLENGES & TEMPORARY SOLUTIONS (2)

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Vendor authorizations - as mailing/faxing authorizations is not possible:

- Before authorizations are emailed to a vendor the following needs to happen.
  1. All approvals must be completed
  2. You must print preview the authorization, in so that it can get treasury processed
  3. **The last step would be to email the authorization to the vendor**

All staff that produces authorizations can email them out so that nothing goes into batch.

- When in an authorization, go to file, send to, and enter their email address, OR
- When in ANY document, web page, etc., you can convert it to a PDF by going to File, Print, and selecting “print to PDF.” A dialogue box will then pop up, and prompt you to save the PDF as a document.
- Reach out and request that vendors send all invoices and authorizations electronically via email, which can then be saved and uploaded into FACTS as appropriate.
- This would allow staff to certify payments (if you need a reminder how to certify contact your supervisor or please let me know and we can arrange training)

# CHALLENGES & TEMPORARY SOLUTIONS (3)

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## Staff Supervision

- Since in-person supervision is not possible, please make a conscious effort to maintain contact with your supervisor/staff.
- Similarly to remote counseling with consumers, supervisors and staff should be scheduling phone-based sessions to review any relevant items, check-ins, and provide supervision.
- Communicate regularly via email with any challenges, updates, questions, and guidance.
- I am available and can be reached via email or at 862-754-5406 if you or the staff have any questions

# ONLINE TRAINING RESOURCES

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- Mississippi State National Technical Assistance Center on Blindness and Visual Impairment
  - Course Catalogue: <https://nrtc.catalog.instructure.com/>
  - HUGE list of free courses specifically about blindness and visual impairments; courses are offered using the Canvas platform. This courses may result in receiving ACVREP Credits
  - For directions on how to sign up and access courses, see their FAQs - <https://www.ntac.blind.msstate.edu/courses/>
  - A certificate is available after completion, which should be printed and sent to your supervisor and staff development for recording in your employee file

# ONLINE TRAINING RESOURCES (2)

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- The National Training Resource Center of Mississippi State University - [www.oib-tac.org](http://www.oib-tac.org)
  - Has a list of remote support and activity groups under the resource tab. Also, “Lessons for Living” under the direct service/curriculum tabs. Lessons could be emailed to consumers, follow up phone calls could provide additional support.
- National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM) - <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/>
  - Centralized site for ALL training and resources coming out of RSA, or RSA-funded Technical Assistance Centers. Also includes peer-reviewed resources, as well as best practices developed by state agencies.
  - May be challenging to find what you’re looking for, as there is so much information available, it may be difficult to filter and find relevant information unless you know specifically what you’re looking for.
  - Of particular interest may be resources for Motivational Interviewing, including a training series developed by Oregon VR. <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/Download.aspx?type=doc&id=4783>

# ONLINE TRAINING RESOURCES (3)

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- Starting immediately, Hadley is offering all of our [Continuing Education \(CE\) seminars](#) [free of charge](#). This small token of our appreciation for the professionals in our community can help you use some of the increased hours at home to learn new skills and earn CE's.

Just enter “**FreeCE**” in the scholarship/discount field upon registration.

In addition, Hadley’s discussion groups for clients will continue. Maintaining connection at a time like this can be difficult, and yet more important than ever. Please encourage any client who may be feeling more isolated these days to join in, either on the phone or online. [Here’s a link for the schedule.](#)



# ADDITIONAL WAYS TO ENGAGE AND SUPPORT YOUR CONSUMERS WHEN NOT ABLE TO VISIT IN PERSON

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- Social support and keeping track of their health status with phone conversations
- Maybe they can identify a family member/friend to Facetime to identify and read mail
- Help walk them through online shopping, online bill paying
- Provide information for online grocery shopping, prescription filling and delivery service
- Swap recipe ideas, cooking and baking strategies
- Inform them of free conference call lines so that they can talk with groups of friends and families



# THANK YOU

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THIS INFORMATION WAS SHARED BY THE OIB-TAC TEAM WITH SPECIAL PERMISSION  
FROM ELIZABETH DESHIELDS