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## HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE 5/13/20

The closure of our school through June due to COVID-19 is having a significant impact on our special needs student population as well as those employees' whose jobs require them to be on campus (specifically in those departments that provide programming/care for students/animals or maintain our facilities). Before the pandemic started, our students who required residential treatment were unable to function in the community or their home. While most of them have remained at home since mid-March, it is expected that many will need to return to campus in order to maintain safe behavior and continue the progress they have made in our program.

Since our initial closure, we allowed employees who are in and/or oversee essential jobs that require them to be on campus to stay home if they live with someone who is medically fragile and at higher risk if they contract COVID-19. In anticipation of a significant increase in the number of residents returning to campus before our school reopens and to ensure we have enough staff to provide safe coverage as well as adequate programming, we need to change that.

Beginning May 26, 2020, the only employees who will not be put on the schedule to work on campus in essential jobs that cannot be done remotely, are those who, *themselves*, are medically fragile and at higher risk if they contract COVID-19. We will continue to follow the CDC and/or NYS Department of Health guidelines, so only employees who meet any of the below criteria themselves and who provide or have already provided a doctor's note confirming it, will be kept off the schedule:

- People who are 69 years and older
- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have a serious heart condition
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease
- People with liver disease
- People who are immunocompromised, including those receiving cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS and/or prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications

We will no longer be able to allow people to stay home if they do not meet any of the above criteria but someone in their household does. This is an unfortunate but realistic necessity we must face in order to remain fully operational now and best secure our program's future. We encourage anyone in this situation to research possible precautions to take in your home and to follow our policies and procedures already in place to protect our students and staff when you are on campus (precaution information can be found at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)). Thus far we have successfully limited the number of staff infected by using precautions on campus and we are confident that we can all remain as safe as possible if everyone follows the new rules for social distancing and wearing face protection when working.

We understand that the idea of returning to work under these conditions and after an extended absence can be very stressful. Our EAP continues to be an available resource for us all; if you need to speak with a professional counselor at any time, please do not hesitate to call 800-252-4555 or 800-225-2527. Supervisors/department directors will be reaching out soon to those employees who will be expected to return to work to plan for you to be put back on the schedule.