



COMMISSIONER
Jon Weizenbaum

November 7, 2014

To: All Adult Day Care Facilities, Assisted Living Facilities, Home and Community Support Services Agencies, Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with an Intellectual Disability or Related Conditions, and Nursing Facilities

Subject: **Provider Letter 14-29** – Regulatory Expectations Related to Ebola

The purpose of this letter is to inform providers of DADS regulatory expectations related to Ebola and to provide links to additional information on Ebola that providers may use to help ensure the health and safety of staff members and individuals receiving services.

DADS Regulatory Expectations

Federal regulations and state rules require that providers ensure that no staff members with symptoms of an infectious disease are allowed to deliver services to individuals in programs regulated by DADS. Due to the infectious nature of Ebola and the medically fragile nature of many individuals receiving services in DADS programs, DADS has determined that any staff person that the local health authority, Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has quarantined or identified as being monitored due to high risk or some risk of potential exposure to Ebola falls under this requirement and must not be in contact with individuals receiving services until he or she receives a letter from public health officials indicating he or she has been cleared and no longer presents a risk.

Providers are also expected to inform DADS of serious incidents that present a risk to the health and safety of individuals receiving services. Notification that local, state, or federal health authorities have quarantined a member of the provider's staff or are monitoring a member of the provider's staff due to high risk or some risk of potential exposure to Ebola falls under this requirement. If a provider receives a notification of this nature, the provider must immediately report the information to DADS Consumer Rights and Services (CRS) at 1-800-458-9858.

Upon receipt of this information, CRS will inform the DADS regional office of the situation. Staff from the regional office will conduct periodic follow-up with the provider to ensure the staff person in question is not working with individuals in DADS programs until he or she has received clearance from public health officials. Once an individual has received a letter documenting that he or she no longer presents a risk to public health, the provider must email or fax a copy of the letter to the DADS regional program manager. Once the program manager has confirmed receipt of the letter, the provider can allow the employee to return to work.

Additional State and Federal Reporting Requirements

In addition to the DADS requirements noted above, providers should be aware that [Health & Safety Code Chapters 81, 84, and 87](#) require specific information regarding notifiable conditions to be reported to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Specifically, healthcare providers, hospitals, laboratories, and schools are required to report patients who are suspected of having a notifiable condition under [TAC, Title 25, Part 1, Chapter 97](#). Report confirmed and suspected cases to 1-800-705-8868. Additional information regarding infectious disease control reporting is available at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/investigation/conditions/>.

Links to Additional Information Regarding Ebola

The, CDC, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), DSHS, and DADS have recently released information related to Ebola and the recent cases identified in the United States. Providers are strongly encouraged to review the information at the links below and to monitor the websites of these organizations for future updates.

For the latest and most reliable information about the Ebola virus in Texas, go here <https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXHHSC/subscriber/new> and sign up for email updates from the Texas Department of State Health Services.

CDC media statements and other CDC information regarding Ebola can be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>.

DSHS news releases can be accessed at <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/news/releases.shtm>.

If you have questions about Ebola, please contact your local health department, or for clinical infectious disease information, contact DSHS Infectious Disease Epidemiology & Surveillance at 1-800-252-8239 or 512-776-7676.

If you have questions on the federal regulations or state licensure rules enforced by DADS, please contact a policy specialist in the Regulatory Services Policy, Rules and Curriculum Development unit, at 512-438-3161.

Sincerely,

[signature on file]

Mary T. Henderson
Assistant Commissioner, Regulatory Services

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