



**DELAWARE HEALTH  
AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

DIVISION OF  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES

COMMUNITY SERVICES

May 5, 2020

Dear DDDS Families,

As we embark on a new month in the COVID-19 pandemic, I wanted to take some time to acknowledge the difficult circumstances everyone is living in. The month of May is typically one full of celebrations and milestones, whether prom, graduation, weddings or other exciting events. While we will not get to experience those events as we normally have in the past, it does not minimize the importance of such milestones.

In addition to the missed celebrations, we are also dealing with confusion and fear in the form of uncertainty. As Delawareans, we wonder when life will re-open as we once knew and were accustomed to. We wonder if jobs and livelihoods will exist for us once COVID-19 is over. We also worry about our loved ones, who are far from us and we can't see and interact with the way we would like.

With sadness, the Division mourns the loss of five service recipients and one direct support professional from COVID-19. We send our thoughts to their families and friends at this very sad time. Out of respect for the individuals who have lost their lives, and because of privacy laws, we will not share identifying information about them. The loss of these lives really underscores the vulnerability of our DDDS population.

Please continue to practice social distancing. Please wear a facemask and wash your hands often. When in doubt, sanitize surfaces. We are not out of this pandemic yet, and it's more important than ever to remain vigilant about stopping the spread of the virus.

The provider community continues to follow the CDC guidelines for ensuring the health and safety of service recipients. They are finding creative ways to keep people engaged and entertained during these isolating times. Service recipients living at home continue to reach out to their Columbus Community Navigators with requests or just to check-in. Please do not hesitate to connect with your loved ones' Support Coordinator or Community Navigator for anything.

COVID-19 will eventually be a thing of the past. We are not there yet, but the Division remains committed in our resolve to help everyone get back to whatever the new normal will be, as soon as it is safe to do so.

We are all in this together.

Be well,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cory Ellen Nourie, MSS, MLSP".

Cory Ellen Nourie, MSS, MLSP  
Director of Community Services