From: Williams, Edwina <edwina.williams@dss.virginia.gov>
Date: Wed, Feb 17, 2021 at 5:08 PM
Subject: Emergency Preparedness-Severe Winter Weather
To: <DSS_LICENSING@listserv.cov.virginia.gov>

The attached file is being sent to assisted living facilities, adult day care centers, independent foster homes, child placing agencies, children’s residential facilities, child caring institutions, child day centers, certified preschools, family day homes, voluntarily registered family day homes, family day systems, religiously exempt child day centers, short-term child day centers, unlicensed child day programs receiving child care subsidy assistance and providers that filed an exemption from the Virginia Department of Social Services Email Distribution Service.

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DATE: February 17, 2021

TO: All Adult and Children’s Programs

FROM: Tara Ragland, Director
Division of Licensing Programs

SUBJECT: Emergency Preparedness- Severe Winter Weather

Due to the upcoming severe winter storm, VDSS would like to provide you with informative resources that will assist residents and staff to stay safe, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following links may be beneficial as you review and update your existing emergency preparedness and response plan to include COVID-19 infection prevention and control practices:

CDC Natural Disasters, Severe Weather, and COVID-19
CDC Natural Disasters & COVID-19: Resources for Professionals & Emergency Workers
VDH Winter Weather Preparedness
Virginia Department of Emergency Management
Ready.gov Prepare for Winter Weather
FEMA Get Ready for Winter Weather
National Weather Services-Winter Safety
American Red Cross
Evacuation Zone Notification
Licensed Assisted Living Facilities and Children’s Residential Facilities

If you relocate residents due to an emergency or accept residents from another facility, please follow your emergency preparedness and response plan, as well as infection control guidelines from VDH and CDC. The CDC website has information on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Assisted Living Facilities and VDSS COVID-19 Mitigation Plans for ALFs. Additionally, VDH has COVID-19 Interim guidance for Group/Congregate Residential Settings.

Relocating residents safely when necessary:

Please contact your licensing inspector or administrator immediately by phone or email. If you do not reach them, please call the main number of your licensing office to inform the office that the facility is relocating.

Provide the following information to the licensing office:
- Your facility’s contact name, address, and telephone number that can be accessed during the relocation period;
- The receiving facility’s name, address, and telephone number;
- The number of residents that are relocating; and
- The number of staff that are relocating, including the number of licensed healthcare providers and registered medication aides.

Important measures to follow as you relocate:
- Follow VDH and CDC COVID-19 infection control guidelines;
- Exercise safety in your relocation travel;
- Ensure that you have the means to account for all residents during the relocation, sheltering, and return phases;
- Maintain active communications with the receiving facility to ensure they are prepared and capable of providing for the health, safety, and welfare of your residents;
- Follow your facility’s relocation plan, paying close attention to major issues such as taking resident’s information, family/legal representative’s contact information and notifications, medications/MARs, assistive devices, etc.;
- Take extra precautions with your special needs populations as the relocation process may increase distress responses; and
- Contact your licensing inspector when you arrive at the receiving location and contact the licensing inspector when you return to the facility.

Receiving residents from another facility:

Please contact your licensing inspector or administrator immediately by phone or email. If you do not reach them, please call the main number of your licensing office to inform the licensing office that you are planning to accept relocated residents.
Provide the following information to the licensing office:

- Your facility’s contact name, address, and telephone number that can be accessed during the relocation time period;
- The relocating facility’s name, address, and telephone number;
- The number of residents relocating to your facility; and
- The number of staff that are relocating, including the number of licensed healthcare providers and registered medication aides, if appropriate.

Important measures to follow as you receive residents:

- With the additional residents, you are able to following the VDH and CDC COVID-19 infection control guidelines;
- If your facility will be exceeding your current use and occupancy classification number, you must contact your local building and fire officials to discuss this with them prior to the arrival of the relocated residents. In emergency cases, local officials may allow an increase in occupancy for a limited period of time. However, there are stipulations that you need to follow and it is imperative that you contact your local building and fire officials to gain approval;
- Maintain active communication with the relocating facility to ensure you are prepared and capable of providing for the health, safety, and welfare of their residents, and your own facility’s residents, including enough staff and emergency supplies for additional residents; and
- When the relocated residents have departed the facility, notify your licensing inspector that you are back to normal operations.