



*Sedgwick County...
working for you*

Developmental Disability Organization

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Dee E. Nighswonger, LMSW, LCAC, NADD-DDS
Director

To: Sedgwick County IDD Affiliates

With the holidays approaching, the Sedgwick County Developmental Disability Organization (SCDDO) wanted to reach out to providers about holiday celebrations and safety precautions. Our community is currently experiencing a significant spike in COVID – 19 and our hospitals are at capacity. Ensuring the safety of persons served is a foundational responsibility of all IDD providers. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention encourages virtual celebrations or limiting celebrations to members within the same households. Health guidance indicates that large gatherings should be strongly discouraged. Additionally, the current Sedgwick County Health Order places obligations on all businesses and organizations in Sedgwick County to enforce the wearing of masks or other face coverings.

The SCDDO supports providers as they review situations and weigh how best to respect individuals' rights while also ensuring safety. We understand that there is no simple solution and parents/guardians may not agree with an agency's safety precautions; however, our current situation requires difficult choices. This is not about denying access to services but about being clear on expectations and spelling out any safety precautions that will be implemented. Please also see the information provided by KDADS Secretary Laura Howard regarding the holidays and waiver programs.

If you have any questions or require additional information, feel free to contact Shelley Herrington or myself.

Sincerely,

Dee E. Nighswonger
Director