
POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR RETURNING TO IN-PERSON PROGRAMS April 1, 2022

Voices of Hope for Aphasia continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation daily including emerging variants. We are regularly assessing the risk to determine if it is safe to meet in person, the precautions recommended for facilities such as ours. We will be extremely conservative in making decisions for the health and safety of our members, many of whom fall into the highest at-risk category, but will also weigh the negative effects of isolation against the reduced risks of serious infection to those who are fully vaccinated and boosted.

We will be following guidelines and recommendations from the CDC and local government and reserve the right to make changes to this policy as things change. We also reserve the right to discontinue in-person sessions if we do not feel it is in the best interest and safety of our members, staff, or volunteers.

These are the current protocols and policy:

ST PETE, DUNEDIN, TAMPA:

- In-person sessions will continue be offered only to participants who have been **fully vaccinated** (2-weeks post final shot). *Boosters are strongly encouraged as they reduce the severity of illness if infected.*
- To limit the number of people within the group rooms, we ask **family members to wait elsewhere**. Exceptions will be made for new members; family may observe and participate in initial sessions.
- We will continue to offer **online sessions**.
- Our center will be **deeply cleaned and disinfected** weekly. All group rooms will be sanitized between each session.
- High quality **air purifiers/filters** with dual HEPA H13 filters will be placed in group meeting rooms.
- **Hand sanitizers** will be made available throughout the center and within the meeting rooms.
- **Masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer** will be made available to those who need them.
- All group room surfaces will be **cleaned through-out the day** with bleach wipes and disinfecting products approved by the CDC and EPA for COVID-19 safety.

- All surfaces and items within the center and group rooms including, doorknobs, chairs, pens, treatment materials, bathroom surfaces, and more will be **cleaned daily** with products approved by the CDC and EPA for COVID-19 safety.

POLICY:

- **Temperatures** : *we will no longer be checking temperatures when arriving for group sessions. We will keep an attendance log, but will not check temperatures. We urge you to continue to monitor your own health, however, and **STRONGLY REQUEST that you do not come to the groups if you are feeling ill in any way.***

- Everyone must sign a **COVID-19 Liability Waiver Policy** (below) and the acknowledgement and acceptance of our policies. We make decisions for the health and safety of our members, staff, volunteers, and families, and we depend upon each of you to honor our policy and help us keep each other safe.

- You will no longer be required to sign the COVID screener prior to entering a session, however, we **STRONGLY REQUEST that you do not come to the groups if you are feeling ill in any way.**

- Masks are now optional. Please wear a mask if you feel more comfortable that way. If you are experiencing allergies that are causing you to cough or sneeze, we will ask you to put your mask back on.

- **Hand-sanitizing** will be required when you enter and exit the center OR upon entering or **re-entering** the group room at the Hale Senior Center and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

- Physical distancing will be encouraged wherever possible, but we will now increase the size of the groups.

- For members attending two sessions in one day, lunch will be allowed in the center or group room, but we will require distance between family groups and hands must be washed and/or sanitized before and after eating. Hand sanitizer will be provided.

In addition, we will **require our members, staff, volunteers, and any other persons** who may need to enter our center to exercise extreme precautions.

Please help keep each other safe and STAY HOME:

- We are suspending the DOMESTIC travel wait time. You may return immediately to groups upon returning from a trip, however, **we STRONGLY REQUEST that you monitor yourself closely and please stay home if you are feeling ill in any way.**

- For international or cruise travel, you may not participate in group sessions for 5 days after your return. Please closely monitor yourself and DO NOT return to group sessions if you are feeling ill in any way.
- If you don't feel comfortable returning to in-person meetings, please take advantage of our online sessions
- Do not come to the groups:
 - if you feel ill. Please contact us if you need any assistance,
 - if you have a temperature over 100.4F,
 - if you have unexplained body aches,
 - if you have participated in activities deemed by the CDC to be moderate-high risk.
- NOT COME TO THE GROUPS If you have been in contact, within the past 10 days, with someone who is, or may be, ill.

We reserve the right to make changes to this policy based on new recommendations by the CDC and local government.