

Update on Project PLASE's Response to COVID-19

April 13, 2020

Last week, PLASE learned that 2 shelter members tested positive for COVID-19 virus. Immediately upon hearing this, we reached out to the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD), Mayor's Office for Homeless Services, and Healthcare for the Homeless for guidance on how to best address this situation in a healthy manner for all involved.

Shelter members who tested positive have not been at PLASE since March 27th and 31st. No other person at PLASE (staff or client) has exhibited any symptoms or the virus, both the month prior to their diagnosis or in the 17 days since they have not been on site—time elapsed has surpassed the incubation or infectious period.

BCHD recommended that staff who had contact with those who tested positive 48 hours prior to their symptoms contact their doctor and follow their guidance, as they would consider that individual's health history. Shelter supervisors promptly contacted all shelter staff individually, to advise them.

Meanwhile, congruent with PLASE's COVID-19 protocol implemented on March 17th, clients or staff members experiencing fever, chills, new cough, and shortness of breath should contact their primary care provider and inform their supervisor immediately. A quarantine site for clients who may qualify for a test while awaiting results exists off site. There is another site to isolate any homeless citizen who may test positive to rest and heal away from others during this time.

Since March, shelter staff have been screening staff and residents once a day. Now, we screen **residents twice a day with the written screening tool, and have been taking staff members and residents' temperatures once a day**. PLASE staff and clients will continue to disinfect 4 times a day for all areas hands touch. All that we do is per the health departments' guidance.

PLASE has also received a donation of 100 facemasks, received a large order today, and will have other orders delivered over the next week or two. All staff members and residents that must be within 6 feet of one another must wear a mask. Programmatic changes, such as staggering meals have been implemented for the last month to limit contact and to assist with social distancing.

Everyone will continue to review and use the [CDC guidance](#) and to receive other written and presented materials and updates about the virus. The Baltimore City and County Health Departments' investigation concerning the two who contracted COVID-19 is ongoing. Their diligence has been both helpful and reassuring.

We will continue to evolve and adapt, as we all do, as new information becomes available! With any questions about our practices during this unprecedented time, please email us at infor@projectplase.org. As always, our clients' and staff's safety are paramount. Doing everything in our power to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is our first priority, while we find creative ways to provide housing and services to those in Permanent or Temporary Housing during this pandemic.

Thank you



Mary C. Slicher, Executive Director