

## **INFORMED CONSENT FOR IN-PERSON SERVICES DURING COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**

This document contains important information about Easterseals Capital Region & Eastern Connecticut (hereinafter Easterseals) decision to resume in-person services in light of the COVID-19 public health crisis. Easterseals follows infection control recommendations made by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). We follow the activities of these agencies so that our infection control procedures are current and compliant with each agencies' recommendations, guidelines, and regulations. Based on the current recommendations, Easterseals has implemented some changes to help protect our patients/clients, staff, and families as we begin to resume in person services.

Please read this carefully and let us know if you have any questions. *When you sign this document, it will be an official agreement between you and Easterseals.*

### **Decision to Provide Face-to-Face Service Delivery**

Easterseals has agreed to provide in-person service for some or all future sessions. If there is a resurgence of the pandemic or if immediate health concerns arise, however, we may require that services be postponed until it is safe to resume in-person visits and/or services may be conducted via telehealth if appropriate. You understand that, if we believe it is necessary, we may return to telehealth and/or postpone services for everyone's well-being.

If you decide at any time that you would feel safer not meeting in person, we respect that decision and just ask that you let us know as soon as possible. We can discuss the option of telehealth services if it is feasible and clinically appropriate. Reimbursement for telehealth services, however, is also determined by the insurance companies and applicable law, so that is an issue we may also need to discuss.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns regarding meeting face-to-face, using telehealth services, and/or postponing your appointment.

### **Risks of Opting for In-Person Services**

You understand that by coming to the office, you are assuming the risk of exposure to the coronavirus (or other public health risk). This risk may increase if you travel by public transportation, cab, or ridesharing service.

## **Your Responsibility to Minimize Your Exposure**

To obtain services in person, you agree to take certain precautions which will help keep everyone (you, Easterseals staff and providers, other patients/clients, and our families) safer from exposure, sickness, and possible death. If you do not adhere to these safeguards, it may result in services being cancelled, postponed, and/or being conducted via a telehealth arrangement (whichever is most clinically appropriate).

To obtain services in person, you understand and agree to each of the following:

- Our office will communicate with you before your appointment to ask you some screening questions regarding possible exposure to the coronavirus.
- You will only keep your in-person appointment if you are symptom-free (i.e., you do not have any illness symptoms, such as fever, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing, diarrhea, etc.). If you are experiencing any symptoms at the time of your appointment, we will reschedule your in-person appointment to a later date.
  - Your temperature will be taken by your provider when you arrive for your appointment. If your temperature is elevated (99.5° Fahrenheit or higher), or if you have other symptoms, your in-person appointment will be cancelled and rescheduled for a later date. You will not be charged a cancellation fee.
- When you arrive for your appointment, we ask that you contact the front desk by calling 860-270-0600 and dialing extension 100.
- Staff will instruct you when to come to the front door to be let into the building.
- If needed, you may bring only one (1) caregiver/support person to come with you into the building for the appointment. Once the visit has started, caregivers/supports will respectfully be asked to wait outside the building (such as in the car) for the duration of the appointment in order to reduce the number of people in the reception/waiting area at any one time.
- You and anyone else with you coming into the building must wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth at all times when actually in the building. You (and our staff) will wear a face mask for the duration of your appointment (*Note, testing appointments may last 3-4+ hours, including breaks*).
- You will wash your hands with soap and water when you enter the building.
- You will adhere to the safe distancing precautions we have set up in the waiting room and testing/treatment room. For example, you will not move chairs or sit where we have signs asking you not to sit.
- There will be no physical contact (e.g. no shaking hands) with any staff.
- You will try not to touch your face or eyes with your hands. If you do, you will immediately wash or sanitize your hands.
- If you are bringing your child, you will make sure that your child follows all of these sanitation and distancing protocols.
- You will take steps between appointments to minimize your exposure to COVID-19.

- If you have a job that exposes you to other people who are infected, you will immediately let us know.
- If your commute or other responsibilities or activities put you in close contact with others (beyond your family), you will let us know.
- If a resident of your home tests positive for the infection or has been told to self-quarantine within 14 days of your appointment, you will immediately let us know and we will discuss alternative arrangements for your appointment if necessary.

Easterseals may change the above precautions if additional local, state, or federal orders or guidelines are published. If that happens, we will discuss any necessary changes with you.

### **Easterseals Commitment to Minimize Exposure**

Easterseals has taken steps to reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus within the office. This includes arranging appointment times to allow for social distancing between patients/clients and minimize the number of people in the reception area at any one time and regularly wiping down and disinfecting common surfaces such as door knobs, tables, and arm rests, as well as offices and testing material after each patient/client. We have posted our efforts in the office. Please let us know if you have questions about these efforts.

### **If You Are Sick**

Easterseals is committed to keeping you, our staff, other patients/clients, and all of our families safe from the spread of this virus. If you show up for an appointment and any of our staff believe that you have a fever or other symptoms, or believe you have been recently exposed to coronavirus, we will ask that you leave the office immediately. We will follow up with you via telephone to discuss alternative arrangements for treatment services as appropriate.

### **Confidentiality in the Case of Infection**

If you test positive for the coronavirus after your appointment, please notify us as soon as possible so that we can take appropriate actions, such as required for contact tracing. We may be required to notify local health authorities that you have been in the office. If we have to report this, we will only provide the minimum information necessary for their data collection and will not go into any details about the reason(s) for your visits. *By signing this form, you are agreeing that Easterseals may do so without an additional signed release.*

If your treatment provider tests positive for the coronavirus within 14 days of your appointment, we will notify you so that you can take appropriate actions.

**Informed Consent**

This agreement supplements the general informed consent/business agreement that were agreed to at the start of your services at Easterseals.

By my signature below, after fully and carefully considering all the potential risks involved, I affirm and agree to the following terms and conditions:

1. All information I have provided regarding unexplained symptoms and COVID-19 risks are complete and accurate.
2. I understand that exposure to COVID-19 involves a certain degree of risk that could result in illness, permanent disability, or death.
3. I acknowledge that Easterseals is following re-opening rules set in place by both state and federal agencies.
4. I am fully compliant with all state and federal guidelines regarding COVID-19 preventive precautions.
5. On behalf of myself, my heirs, and any personal representatives or agents, I release, waive, and agree to hold-harmless Easterseals, its employees, directors, staff, representatives, and clients from and against, any and all cause of action, claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses, and compensation for damages or loss to myself and/or property that may be caused by any act or failure to act by Easterseals, or that may otherwise arise in any way in connection with any services received from Easterseals.
6. I release Easterseals from any and all liability.

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Patient/Client PRINT Name

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Patient/Client Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Legal Guardian PRINT Name  
(if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness PRINT Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date