



CLIFF 1160000

April 1, 2020

Dear Choice in Supports for Independent Living (CSIL) Client,

The focus in BC continues to be to contain the spread of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in our communities and at a provincial level. The majority of people who become infected with COVID-19 will experience a mild illness that will not require medical care, but those who are vulnerable to the disease – those who are elderly or who have underlying conditions that compromise the immune system – are at risk for severe illness. In light of increasing concerns about the spread of COVID-19, [we would like to assure clients and families that we are taking appropriate measures to protect health authority (HA) employees, CSIL clients and their staff. The Ministry of Health (Ministry) is asking that all CSIL employers comply with direction given by the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) with regards to self-isolation, and universal precautions when in contact with HA staff and/or CSIL employees. Should CSIL clients have a new or worsening cough, fever or shortness of breath, the CSIL client and their employee should practice frequent hand washing and wear a mask. If HA staff are visiting the home of a CSIL client for assessment or re-assessment, staff may take additional precautions, such as wearing masks, gloves, and protective gowns.

The Ministry has worked with the HAs to allow exceptions to CSIL policy in the [Home and Community Policy Manual \(HCCPM\)](#) and the [CSIL Expense Guidelines](#) on a 3-month time-limited basis, during Covid-19 and at the Ministry's discretion. All exceptions must be reported to HA case managers for monitoring purposes. To receive additional funding from HAs, CSIL clients must provide adequate justification and supporting evidence of need. Time-limited exceptions that pertain to CSIL are as follows:

- In the current [CSIL Expense Guidelines](#), sick pay is listed as an optional expense at 2%-3% per year, to a maximum of five days per year. This pay is required to be expensed from the overall funding that is provided to CSIL employers
Exception to Policy: HAs will allow a time-limited (3 month) exception and permit CSIL employers to allocate surplus funding towards two weeks of pay for CSIL employees required to self-isolate. If a CSIL employer lacks adequate surplus to cover the payroll burden, the HAs may provide temporary financial relief on a case by case basis, with adequate justification and supporting documentation from CSIL employers.
- Current HCC policy: CSIL employers are responsible for creating a respite plan and a backup service plan to ensure care needs are met on a continuous basis and HAs may authorize home support services from an agency in exceptional circumstances, such as short-term acute illness, to augment CSIL funding.
Exception to Policy: HAs will temporarily (3 month) suspend the requirement to obtain prior approval to use agencies for emergency staffing.

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- Current Home and Community Care (HCC) policy states that “an immediate family member cannot be paid to provide care for a client unless an exception is approved by the HA.”
Exception to Policy: The Ministry allows CSIL Employers to temporarily hire (3 months) immediate family members without the requirement to obtain prior approval, if their supply of regular staff and back up care plan staff has been impacted.

Please continue to monitor the BC Centre for Disease Control website on COVID-19 for updates, information, and resources: www.bccdc.ca/covid19.

- *CSIL Expense Guidelines* allow employees to expense \$20-\$40 per month for supplies required for universal precautions and safety such as disposable gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer.
Exception: CSIL clients will temporarily be permitted to expense greater than \$40 per month towards universal precautions and safety.

Should a CSIL client become hospitalized, CSIL employers, family members and their employees must abide by restrictions and guidelines provided by the Provincial Health Officer, and as published by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC).

PHAC’s guidance materials for novel coronavirus in acute care settings are available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/interim-guidance-acute-healthcare-settings.html>

Additionally, health authorities have been directed to restrict visitors to essential visits only. Essential visits include, but are not limited to:

- Visits for compassionate care (e.g., end of life and critical illness);
- Visits considered paramount to patient/client care and well-being, such as assistance with feeding or mobility; and
- Existing registered volunteers providing services as described above only.

Please reach out to your case manager to report changes to your health and/or how you will be employing staff.

The BC Centre for Disease Control provides current information on Covid-19 at:

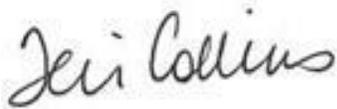
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/clinical-care/vulnerable-populations>

The following will help you, your families and your staff in staying healthy:

- **Wash your hands frequently**
- **Don't touch your eyes, nose and mouth**
- **Cover your cough/sneeze with a tissue or sleeve**
- **Avoid contact with people who are sick**
- **Minimize your contact with others through physical distancing by keeping about two metres apart when outside your home.**

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teri Collins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Teri Collins
Assistant Deputy Minister
Specialized Services Division