

## **New policies related to COVID-19 – updated 3/1/2021**

Aging Care Consultation Services has developed and implemented new policies and procedures to help minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19 (coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2). These changes are guided by laws, regulations, and/or recommendations from local, state, and federal health and industry organizations (listed at the end of these policies). These organizations' recommendations will be monitored on an on-going basis and any needed changes will be incorporated into these policies and procedures, with clients notified as appropriate.

Even though these policies and procedures have been implemented to reduce the risk of spreading or becoming exposed to COVID-19, a 100% RISK-FREE interaction cannot be guaranteed. It is up to clients to determine their own assumption of risk and personal responsibility to decide if services at this time are in their best interest. As always, ACCS has comprehensive professional liability and malpractice insurance, and there are no exclusions for COVID-19/coronavirus or communicable diseases.

**In particular, if you are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19, consult your primary healthcare provider about whether you should have services/visits while the virus is present in our community.**

While information is still limited, the CDC indicates that these underlying conditions place people at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19:

- People aged 65 years or older
- Compromised or suppressed immunity
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic lung disease
- Heart conditions
- Liver disease
- Moderate to severe asthma
- Diabetes
- Severe obesity (BMI 40+)

It is important to understand that because counseling and consultation services involve maintained and close physical proximity over extended periods of time, there may be a higher risk of disease transmission, including COVID-19. In fact, counseling is considered a medium- to high-risk occupation for COVID exposure.

To ensure everyone's safety and wellbeing, ACCS reserves the right to refuse service to clients based on potential or perceived risk. Depending on the situation, ACCS may require clients to have a prescription or medical clearance letter from a medical provider in order to receive in-home visits.

Please take the time to carefully read the following information prior to scheduling. When you schedule your session, you will be asked to confirm your understanding of these new policies and procedures. ACCS will continue to follow local, state, federal, and industry guidance and make adjustments as needed – you will be notified of any changes.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 206-999-5934, or email [karin@agingcareconsult.com](mailto:karin@agingcareconsult.com).

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## **ACCS's new clinic policies related to COVID-19**

*Note: I have had both shots of the Moderna vaccine, and my husband has also (second shot February 8, 2021). We highly encourage everyone to get the vaccine as soon as possible.*

### **Scheduling / preparation procedures**

My workday is carefully planned:

- I do a self-screen for symptoms and temperature check for fever every morning.
- I don't visit with clients when I am sick or when clients or anyone in their household are sick.
- I will see only one client a day if at all possible.
- I am freshly showered and wear clean clothing and shoes for any visit. If I see multiple clients in a day, I will change clothes and shoes and sanitize my car between clients.
- I follow standard hand hygiene and infection control procedures, which include wearing a disposable surgical mask from before the visit, continuously until after leaving the building.
- As part of my emergency preparedness plan, I have sets of comprehensive personal protective equipment (PPE) for myself and disposable face masks for clients in my car.
- Upon returning from a visit, or at the end of my day, I immediately launder my clothing and shoes and also shower.

Before we schedule a visit:

- We will discuss known risk factors, recent travel, vaccine status, and any other concerns.
- We will discuss that while I have taken precautions to lower my risk of exposure, it can never be eliminated.
- If you are not comfortable with the possibility of there being some risk, then I shouldn't visit you in person.
- I will provide you with consent and waiver paperwork to sign and return to me, to ensure your health information is current and to confirm your understanding of ACCS policies.
- This paperwork should be received by ACCS prior to your visit. You may:
  - Complete the forms on your computer and return via email to [karin@agingcareconsult.com](mailto:karin@agingcareconsult.com);
  - Print the forms to complete, then scan and email, or send via fax to 866-305-5149; or
  - Take digital photos and send via email, or text photos to 206-999-5934.
- I will explain the required screening protocol and why everyone must wear a face mask.
- Depending on the circumstances and your health situation, we may need to have other protective equipment on hand and use it appropriately.
- I will discuss how we can make our visits as contact-free as possible:
  - The fewer things I bring in with me, the less chance of exposure for all of us. I will usually only bring my phone and car key in with me. I will be able to take notes and photos in my phone if needed, and can email you notes or document copies later.
  - It would be helpful if you can have your own notepad to take notes for yourself.
  - If we have paperwork or payments to handle, let's do whatever we can online, or by email.

*continued*

## *Scheduling / preparation procedures, continued*

- For clients in assisted living, skilled nursing, or adult family home residences:
  - I will coordinate closely with the facility staff on any protocols, exchange of information, or other guidelines as necessary.
  - I will need to receive permission from the facility staff before visiting. I will not schedule or perform any visits to facilities without first receiving permission and making appropriate arrangements.
  - If a facility refuses a visit, but the client/family believes a visit is needed, we will explore other options and services for assistance.

## **Procedures for visits to clients in their homes or in facilities**

### Before I travel to a visit:

- I will complete a screening tool and fever check on myself.
- I will call at least one hour prior to the appointment time, to ensure everyone is feeling well.
- If you feel ill, there is no penalty or fee for canceling your appointment. Any visit is not advised if you (or any others you live with) have any symptoms of any type of illness.
- As noted above, I will coordinate closely with the facility staff on any protocols, exchange of information, or other guidelines as necessary, in addition to the below procedures.

### When I arrive for a visit, before I enter:

- I will call from the car to let you know I've arrived.
- I will sanitize my hands and put on my face mask before approaching the building.
- For safety, physical touch (shaking hands, hugs) should be avoided.
- At your front door, each person present for the visit will complete a COVID screening form and be scanned with a no touch thermal thermometer.
  - If the thermometer shows a temperature above 100.4°F / 38°C, or if there is any question about everyone being completely healthy, the visit will be rescheduled. It is also recommended that you call your primary care provider for consultation.
  - If you are screened clear, you will sign the form to confirm your understanding of COVID-related risks and waive any liability claims. At your request, a copy of the form will be provided to you via email or postal mail.
- I ask that someone open the doors and move any items so that I can minimize my physical contact within your space.
- We will all use hand sanitizer (I will bring my own, but if you do not have your own, I am happy to bring you some for you to keep).
- Everyone present will wear a face mask (cloth/homemade is fine) before I enter, throughout the visit, until after I leave.

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## *Procedures for visits to clients, continued*

### During the visit:

- If anyone sneezes, coughs, blows their nose, or uses the restroom, we will all use hand sanitizer again.
- We will avoid physical contact and stay at least six feet apart as much as possible.
- I will not eat or drink anything during a visit, and encourage everyone else to avoid it if possible.

### At the end of the visit:

- We will all use hand sanitizer again.
- I will keep my mask and any other protective equipment in place until leaving the property, and will dispose of it properly.

## **Procedures for client visits to my office at my home**

I also see clients in at my home in a separate space with a dedicated entry door and specialized HEPA air filtration equipment (my husband is a massage therapist, and this space has been carefully set up to safeguard clients and reduce exposure risk).

### Before you arrive for an office visit:

- I will complete a screening tool and fever check on myself.
- I will call at least one hour prior to the appointment time, to ensure everyone is feeling well.
- If you (or any others you live with) have any symptoms of any type of illness, any visit is not advised. There is no penalty or fee for canceling your appointment due to illness.
- I will ensure the space is cleaned and sanitized for your visit before you arrive (see below).

### When you arrive for your office visit:

- Please wait in your vehicle until invited in - you can call to let me know you've arrived.
- Put on your face mask before approaching the building. If you need a disposable mask, one will be provided to you before you approach the building. Everyone present will wear a face mask throughout the visit until after leaving the property.
- For safety, physical touch (shaking hands, hugs) should be avoided.
- At the front porch, you will complete a COVID screening form and be scanned with a no-touch thermal thermometer.
  - If the thermometer shows a temperature above 100.4°F / 38°C, or if there is any question about you being completely healthy, your session will be rescheduled. It is recommended that you call your primary care provider for consultation.
  - If you are screened clear, you will sign the form to confirm your understanding of COVID-related risks involved with in-person visits and waive any liability claims. At your request, a copy of the form will be provided to you via email or postal mail.

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*Procedures for client visits to home office, continued*

- You will use hand sanitizer before being escorted to enter the office room through the dedicated door.
- If you are unable to use hand sanitizer, you will be escorted to a sink where you will be required to wash with warm water and soap for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Clients should not open entry/exit doors to reduce surface contact.

During your office visit:

- We will avoid physical contact and stay at least six feet apart as much as possible.
- If anyone sneezes, coughs, or blows their nose, we will all use hand sanitizer again and ensure that any droplets are cleaned up with a sanitizing wipe.
- If you use the restroom, please close the toilet lid before flushing; wash your hands with soap; and use a paper towel to dry your hands, turn off the water, and open the door.
- Dispose of any tissues or paper towels in appropriate garbage bins.
- We will refrain from eating or drinking anything during the visit if possible. If needed, please bring your own water/beverage or snacks in sealed containers (I am not allowed to provide any refreshments).

At the end of your office visit:

- We will all use hand sanitizer again.
- Everyone will keep face masks on until leaving the property.

**Exposure response policy – after any visit**

- As required by law, and as part of the consent/waiver form signed at the start of each visit, please let me know immediately if you develop any COVID symptoms or diagnosis within two weeks of our visit, or if you have any questions or concerns.
- Likewise, I will let you know if I, or any other clients or people I have had contact with, or anyone who has been on the property of my home/office, develop any symptoms/diagnosis within two weeks of our visit.
- We will follow local, county, state, and federal requirements around reporting and contact tracing. Contact details will only be shared if they are relevant based on suspected exposure date, and only for appropriate follow-up by the health department.
- Under federal regulation, the HIPAA Privacy Rule permits a disclosure of the protected health information (PHI) of an individual who has been infected with, or exposed to, COVID-19, with law enforcement, paramedics, other first responders, and public health authorities without the individual's HIPAA authorization for this disclosure.
- ACCS will continue to follow local, state, federal, and industry guidance around policies and procedures, and notify clients regarding any relevant changes.

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## **Sanitizing procedures for home office**

### How the office space is set up:

- Appointment times are scheduled with enough time between so that only one client is on the property at a time and appropriate cleaning/sanitizing can be completed before each client.
- Dedicated door has clients enter directly into office/treatment room with its own restroom.
- Walls and doors are painted with washable paint; cork flooring is antimicrobial.
- Garbage cans are no-touch/motion-sensor.
- Doors and items of use are labeled with appropriate signage. Information is posted regarding hand washing, hand sanitizer use, putting on and removing face masks, health guidelines, etc. Signage is laminated for sanitizing. There are no carpet, draperies, furniture, or decorations, to reduce cleaning.
- Plastic bins are provided for clients' belongings, to limit surface contact.
- Screening and hand sanitizing is done at the front porch of the building where a chair is provided if needed and there is cover from the weather.
- Dedicated cleaning and sanitizing supplies are labeled and stored in a closed container inside the treatment room, and are EPA-approved (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>)
- Cleaning steps follow CDC recommendations (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html>).
- A high-capacity HEPA-filter fan system is used to thoroughly vent the space during cleaning/sanitizing and between clients.

### After each client has left the property:

- Any and all staff having physical proximity to clients change into clean clothing.
- The office/treatment room and bathroom are cleaned and sanitized by staff wearing gloves and masks, using products designated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as known to disinfect against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), with active ventilation.
- In particular, sanitizing wipes are used on all horizontal surfaces in the room and bathroom; furniture; bathroom faucets, sink, toilet seat, and fixtures; all door handles, garbage bins, and client belonging bins.
- After cleaning is completed, staff remove gloves and any other disposable PPE and dispose of them appropriately, then wash hands, then change into clean clothing. Used clothing and materials are laundered following guidelines.

### At the end of each day:

In addition to the cleaning after each client:

- All areas of the office/treatment room and bathroom are cleaned and sanitized thoroughly.
- The floors of the office/treatment room and bathroom are vacuumed, mopped, and sanitized.
- Entry doors are secured and marked with signage that sanitizing has been completed.

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## **Sanitizing procedures for vehicle**

- As part of supporting clients with care management and/or healthcare advocacy services, ACCS occasionally provides transportation to clients.
- The same precautions as described above for in-person visits apply.
- Passengers wear a facemask or cloth face covering from before approaching the vehicle, throughout the ride, and until returning inside.
- Passengers should avoid or limit close contact (within 6 feet) with others while away from home.
- The vehicle is cleaned and disinfected prior to transporting clients.
- Doors and windows remain open when cleaning the vehicle to ensure adequate ventilation.
- Disposable gloves as well as any other PPE required are used according to the product manufacturer's instructions.
- For hard non-porous surfaces within the interior of the vehicle such as hard seats, arm rests, door handles, seat belt buckles, light and air controls, electronics, doors and windows, and grab handles: if the surfaces are visibly dirty, clean with detergent or soap and water; then disinfect with products that are listed as EPA Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for concentration, application method, and contact time for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- For soft or porous surfaces such as fabric seats, remove any visible contamination, if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. After cleaning, use products that are EPA-approved and that are suitable for porous surfaces.
- After cleaning is completed, gloves and any other disposable PPE used are removed and disposed of appropriately, then wash hands immediately.
- If a disposable gown was not worn, clothes worn during cleaning and disinfecting are laundered afterwards using the warmest appropriate water setting and dried completely. Wash hands after handling laundry.

### Other information – rationale on not using other specific methods:

- The efficacy of alternative disinfection methods, such as ultrasonic waves, high intensity UV radiation, and LED blue light against COVID-19 virus is not known. EPA does not routinely review the safety or efficacy of such devices and cannot confirm whether, or under what circumstances, such products might be effective against the spread of COVID-19.
- CDC does not recommend the use of sanitizing tunnels. There is no evidence that they are effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Chemicals used in sanitizing tunnels could cause skin, eye, or respiratory irritation or damage.
- The American Industrial Hygiene Association discourages use of foggers for broad application of disinfectants and says these should not be a substitute for directly applying disinfectant onto a surface.
- ACCS will continue to follow local, state, federal, and industry guidance around policies and procedures, and notify clients regarding any relevant changes.

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## Sources of information guiding these policies

- American Industrial Health Association, [https://www.aiha.org/public-resources/consumer-resources/coronavirus\\_outbreak\\_resources](https://www.aiha.org/public-resources/consumer-resources/coronavirus_outbreak_resources)
- American Medical Association, <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/sustainability/use-covid-19-screening-script-when-reopening-your-practice>
- American Mental Health Counseling Association, <https://www.amhca.org/publications/practiceguidelines/coronavirus>
- Home Care Association of America, <http://www.hcaoa.org/documents/coronavirus-resources/>
- King County Behavioral Health and Recovery Division, <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/community-human-services/mental-health-substance-abuse.aspx>
- King County Department of Community and Human Services, <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/community-human-services/COVID.aspx>
- King County Public Health, <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19.aspx>
- LeadingAge, <https://www.leadingage.org/covid19>
- National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, <https://www.nhpco.org/coronavirus>
- Seattle / King County Public Health, <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19.aspx>
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/framework-non-COVID-care.html>
- U.S. Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, <https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/Emergency/EPRO/Current-Emergencies/Current-Emergencies-page>; <https://www.cms.gov/medicareprovider-enrollment-and-certificationsurveycertificationgeninfopolicy-and/guidance-infection-control-and-prevention-concerning-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-home-health>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Office for Civil Rights, <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/hipaa-covid19/index.html>, <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/covid-19-hipaa-and-first-responders-508.pdf>
- U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>
- Washington Department of Health Board of Massage, <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Licenses/PermitsandCertificates/ProfessionsNewReneworUpdate/MassageTherapist>
- Washington State Department of Health, <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>
- Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, <https://lni.wa.gov/agency/outreach/novel-coronavirus-outbreak-covid-19-resources>; [https://www.lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F414-168-000.pdf?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F414-168-000.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)
- Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/alert/covid-19-information-0>
- World Health Organization, <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

**ACCS COVID-19 Policies – updated on 3/1/2021**

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**Public Health Emergency Screening/Waiver**

Under ACCS policies to reduce risk of exposure to COVID-19 (or SARS CoV-2, or coronavirus), screening is required for each client before every visit. Upon your request, a copy of your signed form can be emailed to you. This is required for clients and any other person present at each visit until further notice.

**Required COVID-19 Screening Information**

Have you, or has anyone in your household:

Had any of the below symptoms in the past 3 weeks?

- Cough
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Fatigue

- Fever (100°F) or chills
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- Congestion or runny nose

- Yes (check boxes)
- New loss of taste or smell
- Muscle or body aches
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

No

Been in close proximity in the last 14 days to anyone who tested positive for COVID-19, has the above symptoms, or who is in quarantine?

Yes  No

Visited or been treated in a hospital, nursing home, or other health care or long-term care facility in the past 30 days?

Yes  No

Traveled out of town in the past 21 days?

Yes  No

Are you, or is anyone in your household, a health care provider or emergency responder?

Yes  No

Have you received the COVID-19 vaccine? Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Not received

Required Temperature Scan: \_\_\_\_\_

*If the thermometer shows a temperature above 100.4°F / 38°C, or if there is any question about you being completely healthy, your visit will be rescheduled at no charge. It is recommended that you call your primary care provider for consultation.*

**Consent for treatment in context of COVID-19**

**By signing this form, I declare that the information provided above is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and:**

I understand that, because counseling and consultation services involve maintained and close physical proximity over an extended period of time, there may be elevated risk of disease transmission, including COVID-19.

I acknowledge that I am aware of the risks involved from receiving services at this time, I voluntarily agree to assume those risks, and I release and hold harmless Karin Taifour LMHC GMHS and Aging Care Consultation Services PLLC from any claims related thereto.

I agree to notify Karin Taifour/ACCS if I develop any of the above-listed symptoms and/or have a diagnosis within two weeks of my visit. I understand my contact information may be released to authorities in the event that a COVID case or exposure occurs.

I give my consent to receive services today and I understand this screening form will need to be completed at each subsequent visit.

Client signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date signed \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Print full name \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
month day year

Provider signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date/time signed \_\_\_\_\_