



2900 Veterans Memorial Highway • Bohemia, NY 11716
 P: (631) 585-0100
 F: (631) 585-0233
 Info@suffahrc.org
 www.ahrCsuffolk.org

Follow us:

Serving Children and Adults with Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities for over 70 Years

November 19, 2021

PAUL H. TORRES
Chief Executive Officer

Dear Individuals, Families, and AHRC Suffolk Team Members:

JOHN MCGUIGAN
Chief Operating Officer

With flu season upon us, I recall the encouraging results we achieved last year with preventing the spread throughout our programs. Mask wearing, thorough cleaning and effective hand washing all helped with prevention. Colder weather brings closed windows and more indoor time while the holidays have the potential to bring larger mixed gatherings-click [HERE](#) for tips to avoid winter illnesses. The CDC has cautioned that we will likely see a spike in COVID as has already been demonstrated in Europe. Please be safe, please take caution; a loved one's life may depend on it.

CHRISTOPHER VEROS
Chief Financial Officer

OFFICERS

JOHN SMITH
President

DEBORAH PFLIEGER
Treasurer

JOSEPH CASSARINI
Secretary

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) imposed November 5 a vaccine mandate with no test-out option for all staff working with individuals from Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs) and other Article 16 clinics. The mandate requires that staff are fully COVID vaccinated; December 5th deadline 1st dose and January 4th deadline two weeks post 2nd (or final) dose. For AHRC Suffolk this has wide reaching implications as not only are all staff working at our two ICFs affected, but also all our staff working at our Knickerbocker, Shoreham and Westhampton Beach Day Habs. Leadership and Human Resources are having personal conversations with all staff impacted by this mandate.

DIRECTORS

Alden B. Kaplan

James P. O'Connor

Yesterday CMS finally approved the Appendix K Waiver change for the use of FMAP funding I have mentioned over the last few months. Though we are still making sense of the details, and we conservatively don't anticipate the funds before late in the first quarter of 2022, the following financial recognition is indicated:

- **COVID Service:** \$1,000 for each full-time DSP employed for at least 90 days between 3/17/2020 and 9/1/2021 and who is still currently employed by the Chapter
- **Longevity and Retention:** Longevity bonus for DSPs employed between 4/1/2020 – 3/31/2021 and who remained on payroll through 9/1/2021; retention bonus for period of 4/1/21 – 3/31/22 for employees who worked during this time and remain on the last complete payroll ending on or before 3/31/22. Bonus to be paid at the end of the retention period.
- **Vaccination Incentive Payment:** available for DSPs who have been fully vaccinated by 12/1/21 at \$500 full-time employee, \$250 part-time employee (at least 20 hours) and \$125 part-time employee (less than 20 hours/week)

The intent of the FMAP funding is to recognize and reward the DSPs who have been so instrumental supporting individuals and keeping them safe during this pandemic. For AHRC Suffolk it is abundantly clear that our whole team has been instrumental in our success therefore we are challenging ourselves as to how well we can similarly and meaningfully recognize **ALL** AHRC Suffolk staff who have been so essential to us during these times. #InItTogether

In other staff news:

- OPEN ENROLLMENT for staff health/dental/vision insurance closes Sunday, November 21 – you must make your selections to ensure no interruption in your benefit coverage
- Staff shortages and COVID has made it difficult in 2021 to take vacation, recognizing that, you will be able to carry over an additional week into 2022 AND if you wish, take advantage of cashing in up to 10 hours before midnight tonight (a second opportunity for the latter will be offered in December)
- As of December 1, 2021 vacation can be taken in increments of 1 hour instead of the half-day/full-day policy giving you more flexibility
- As of January 1, 2022 staff reimbursement for approved continuing education will be doubled from \$2,000 to \$4,000 annually

Stay well, stay safe and thank you for all you do,

Paul H. Torres
Chief Executive Officer

