



Protocol for COVID-19 Resurgence on All GLCAC Facilities and Sites for Clients' Services

GLCAC has followed its reopening protocol by opening up its doors to clients. As such, our management team, with support from members of our staff, has been using our g new protocols in place since we reopened our doors to the public on April 1, 2022.

Our goal was to create a set of protocols that allow for the better management of the large volume and flow of clients that seek our services while ensuring that we continue to uphold the health and safety of our staff, program participants, and the people that we serve through our variety of programs.

Requirements for Entrance to the Buildings

Signage is posted at main entrances informing clients about the reopening of all GLCAC facilities and new entrance protocols implemented, including the need to visit the Help Desk at the main building at 305 Essex Street if a client does not have a scheduled appointment, and the requirement to wear a mask inside all GLCAC facilities. This is required by all clients and visitors despite their vaccine and booster status.

To capitalize on our Agency's success in providing uninterrupted services during the pandemic and expanding our customer serviceability, the Help Desk is opened on weekdays between 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM to provide information on our variety of programs and services, and to help triage residents without scheduled appointments.

With support from our security staff, the Community Service Center (CSC) has resumed its operations, as well, as assisted with the flow of clients once they enter the building, including clients referred by the Help Desk for immediate assistance.

All case management staff operating at the main location has continued to share printouts of their respective calendars of appointments with the security desk daily for following day appointments to help them better prepare for their daily duties. GLCAC Staff will continue to screen staff for recent COVID-19 exposure before setting up client onsite appointments for the safety of our staff and other clients.

Adult education and workforce development participants, and clients with previous appointments will be confirmed at the main entrance by security staff and will be directed to the classrooms on the third floor, and the waiting area on the second floor, respectively, upon conducting a brief COVID-19 screening the day of their appointment and signing in.

The security staff will alert the CSC receptionist about clients' arrival, and in turn, he/she will contact staff from the respective departments to have them escort clients to their offices/meeting spaces. Each program/department will designate an area within their program space for clients waiting their turn for services to ensure proper management of the flow of clients in the CSC lobby area on the second floor.

Clients without appointments (walk-ins) will be directed to the Help Desk to be triaged, except WIC clients who have the option to be seen without an appointment during posted WIC office hours. In cases where clients need to be seen immediately for emergency assistance, Help Desk staff will direct them to the main entrance for assistance with a note to the security staff listing the department for their referral. Once greeted, security staff will call CSC staff to alert them about the referral and will send the client to the second floor once notified by the respective department. Upon being screened for COVID-19 by the security staff, and after signing in, upon being notified by the respective program/department, he/she will direct the client to the CSC receptionist on the second floor. Clients will then be escorted to the proper program office by staff.

The Help Desk and the CSC staff at the main building will be in constant communication with security staff using a walkie-talkie system to ensure that the flow of clients runs smoothly. This communication system will also be used to report any rising safety concerns requiring the presence or intervention of our security staff.

Mask Requirement

Although the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the state of Massachusetts, and the local Board of Health Departments have lifted the mask mandate, we recognize that we are still amid the pandemic and that the COVID-19 virus still represents a public health threat to our staff, program participants, and communities at large.

At GLCAC, the health of our staff and clients is of utmost importance to us, particularly considering that many of the office and meeting spaces at the main building and in many of our offsite facilities are small. It is for this reason that we will continue to require that all visitors and program participants over the age of two (2) wear a mask that fully covers their nose and mouth when entering any GLCAC building and during their appointments or meetings unless there are medical reasons that make it unfeasible to wear masks. In those cases, staff will urge visitors, program participants, and walk-ins to prioritize virtual engagement when possible and

will make the necessary arrangements to facilitate the service delivery. Clients refusing to wear a mask when visiting any of the GLCAC facilities are not allowed access to the building. However, services will be provided outside the facilities, as well as remotely, as needed.

Visitors, program participants, and walk-in clients are asked to change their masks upon entrance to our building to optimize protection and reduce the spread of COVID-19. In our main building, security staff will conduct a brief screening for COVID-19 symptoms on every visitor. The Agency will have disposal cloth masks available when visitors enter the building. People who disclosed having tested positive for COVID-19 in the past five (5) days, those who are experiencing symptoms, and/or people currently awaiting results from a COVID-19 test, will be declined entrance to the building. Security staff will collect their information (name, address, phone number) to share with the Community Service Center and/or the respective department staff to follow up with clients via telephone and/or email to provide the resources or referrals needed.

If a visitor tests positive within five (5) days of their onsite appointment they are required to contact GLCAC's Human Resources Director, Nancee Rothenberg at NRothenberg@glcac.org or by phone at (978) 620-4705 which can be done anonymously to provide proper notification and share testing information. This is being recommended to inform Agency Staff they have been in close proximity to a client/visitor who tested positive to conduct a COVID-19 test for safety purposes

The Agency will enforce mask wearing during times of high COVID-19 cases. Otherwise, mask-wearing is optional for staff who are up to date with their booster vaccine(s), except our Head Start Program staff, who is required by their federal funding entity to wear a mask at all times, with limited exceptions. It is worth mentioning that state, federal, and local guidelines highly recommend mask wearing for people with a weakened immune system or at increased risk for severe illness at age of 60 years, or if they or someone in their household is at increased risk for severe diseases, such as living with a disability, are severely immunocompromised, or other underlying medical conditions (including pregnancy), or is unvaccinated.

Second Floor Waiting Area (CSC Lobby, Main Building)

Up to six people will be seated in the lobby area at any given time until staff escorts them to the respective program offices. **WIC clients will be immediately directed to the WIC office waiting area and will not be required to wait in the lobby area.** This practice will ensure that we follow social distancing protocols that help protect our staff's health and the clients we serve. CSC staff will remain in constant communication with the security staff to let them know when they can send additional people up to wait for services.

Each department will monitor its capacity and will communicate immediately with the CSC Receptionist, who will, in turn, communicate with the security officer via walkie-talkie requesting to temporarily stop the flow of clients to the second-floor lobby and WIC office wait areas until space opens up in these areas.

For inter-departmental referrals, managers and/or staff will contact each department to assess their capacity to take in new clients before sending clients over. Non-emergency clients will be asked to schedule an appointment for a later date if there is no staff or appointments available.

Adult Education/Workforce Development Classrooms (3rd Floor)

Adult education and workforce development classrooms will continue their operations at full capacity, always ensuring that there is proper ventilation. Because vaccination is not a requirement to receive these services, instructors and students need to wear masks during instruction unless unable to do so for medical reasons. In this case, staff will make every effort to provide social distancing or explore the option of remote instruction.

Staff Encouraged to Receive Vaccine Booster(s):

Due to COVID-19 resurgence and the CDC recommendations in tandem with the time that has transpired between when all GLCAC employees were required to have one vaccine if Johnson & Johnson and two vaccines if received Moderna or Pfizer on November 24th, 2021 as part of the Agency's Health and Safety protocols, we are implementing new practices:

- Staff who have not received their first booster shot or are eligible for a second booster have been able to take this action via two GLCAC onsite clinics which were held in June and July. Over 25 GLCAC employees, clients, and their age-appropriate children received a booster shot and a \$25.00 gift card as an incentive.
- As of 07/25/2022, GLCAC employees will begin receiving Agency announcements via email and through our HRIS/Payroll System Paycom to submit proof of their booster shot(s) to the Human Resources Department within seven (7) days of receiving the vaccine to track the documentation and the date it was given. This will enable our Agency to have numbers of staff who are boosted for safety planning in the event of a small breakout, one staff member to another, a positive outbreak in a specific Department or a Child Care Center or a widespread breakout Agency-wide.

Please follow the following steps to submit a copy of your vaccination card with the booster information:

Booster Card Collection Process:

- Email a copy of their Booster card directly to the HR Director, Nancee Rothenberg, at the HR department (nrothenberg@glcac.org)
- Provide a copy of their Booster card to their Supervisor who can email it to the HR Department,
- Leave a copy of their Booster card outside of the HR Department in our secure locked box that we check daily
- Bring a copy to the HR Department to deliver in person. Please ask staff to make an appointment.

Staff Wearing of Masks:

As of July 25th, all employees who have not had their booster shot will be required to wear masks when in public areas of our buildings including the kitchens, bathrooms, and elevators.

Staff who are working directly with clients including the Security Desk and Facilities staff, and who have not received their booster vaccine(s), will be required to wear a mask, as they are client-facing and we have seen a rise in COVID-19 cases for this Agency population during the past 6 weeks. Furthermore, staff who has not been boosted is required to wear a mask indoors at all times, particularly during outbreaks and rises in COVID-19 cases for added precaution. The agency will continue to provide paper masks to all staff.

Group Gatherings:

Large group gatherings onsite will be avoided during times of heightened COVID-19 activity.

Supervisors are asked to monitor their staff's attendance at indoor group events to ensure safety protocols are in place as we want to reduce the spread in our buildings.

Bathroom Facilities

Staff, program participants, and visitors' bathrooms will be open limited to two people during the high period of COVID-19 activity. Second-floor bathrooms designated for public use remain open. COVID-19 Visitors may borrow and return bathroom keys at the 2nd Floor CSC Reception desk.

In anticipation of the increased use of our restroom facilities, bathrooms on the second floor and in other pertinent departments throughout the agency will be checked twice a day by our facilities staff to assess the need for more regular cleaning and disinfecting. Hand soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizers will be replenished regularly, as needed.

Kitchen Areas/Lunch Room

The kitchen and lunchroom areas will be fully reopened and available to all staff. Effective immediately, more than one staff person will be allowed in these spaces. However, we discourage gathering to retrieve or share meals to ensure that we are all doing our part in protecting and upholding our health and safety and that of our colleagues.

Elevator

The use and capacity of the elevator will resume as posted. Only five (5) people are allowed in the elevator at any given time. Visitors and staff who have not received their booster vaccine must wear a mask in the elevator.

Conference/Meeting Rooms

GLCAC will limit regular in-person meetings in our various conference/meeting rooms. Mask wearing is required for all non-boosted staff and distancing is recommended. Return to use of online meetings either Teams or Zoom is recommended.

Food Pantry

Food pantry operations and service delivery have relocated to the main open area in the basement of the main GLCAC facility. Clients accessing these services will enter the building through the main entrance. Once cleared by the security staff, participants will be directed to the basement stairs where staff/volunteers will greet them, collect their information, and direct them to the grocery collection line. Once they collect their groceries, they will be directed to exit the area through the basement stairs and will be escorted out of the building by our security staff.

Only ten to fifteen (10—15) participants will be allowed entrance to the food pantry at a time. Our security staff and the food pantry staff/volunteers will be in constant communication with security staff via walkie-talkie to help manage the flow of participants.

Food pantry hours will be expanded to 3:00—5:00 PM to accommodate higher demands for food assistance and provide ample time for participants who need to use the elevator to access services in the basement.

Staff Gym

The staff gym located in the basement of the main building will reopen for staff use. However, during periods of COVID-19 recurrence only one staff member will be allowed in the small gym space at any given time in our collective effort to protect and uphold the health and safety of our staff. We will return to permitting two staff when COVID-19 numbers decline. **The gym will be open between 12:00 PM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, EXCEPT FOR TUESDAYS to allow staff to prepare for and operate our weekly Food Pantry.** The gym door will remain locked and staff will need to sign the key out at the security desk. The gym door will need to remain open during use to increase ventilation. A telephone is available outside the gym for staff to call our security staff for needed assistance and in case of emergencies.

Early Learning—Head Start & Childcare

Although the mask mandate was lifted by the State of Massachusetts for childcare centers, our Head Start program follows stricter federal guidelines. As a result, staff working for and children attending our Head Start program follow a different set of guidelines and expanded protocols.

Until further notice, all Head Start Program staff, children in attendance, and visitors must continue to wear a mask at all times, with limited exceptions. Outside masking is also expected unless there is a guarantee that social distancing is in place. Early Learning staff will refrain from mixing children or teachers whenever possible, will increase sanitizing practices, and will test children in the morning during rises in COVID-19 cases to optimize their health and safety and that of the staff. For more information on Head Start Program guidelines, you may contact Justine Donovan, the Division Director of Early Education at extension 4623, or via email at idonovan@glcac.org.

Transportation

The State of Massachusetts has also lifted the mask mandate for grades K-12 and Child Care Transportation (school buses and vans), effective March 1, 2022. However, GLCAC will continue to require that our staff and children attending our various Early Learning programs wear masks while being transported in our buses, and will ensure proper distancing between children while on the bus.

PPE Equipment/Supplies

GLCAC will continue to provide PPE equipment, including N-95 masks, hand sanitizers, and gloves, to staff as requested. Paper masks will be available to clients and will be distributed by our security staff, and designated staff in our offsite locations, upon entrance to the buildings. The Plexiglas that was installed during the pandemic will not be removed from any of the GLCAC offices and sites to optimize protection.

All GLCAC office and meeting spaces in all building locations have proper air ventilation systems in place. Air purifiers will be additionally provided, as needed, to improve air circulation and help decrease the spread of COVID-19 and other air-transmissible viruses.

COVID-19 Positive Tests & Quarantine

If a staff member tests positive for COVID-19 although they have been vaccinated and boosted, they are required to follow our current COVID-19 CDC Recommendation for GLCAC Staff for Isolation and Quarantine Period protocol requiring the staff member to leave or refrain from entering the premises and to quarantine for 5 days, followed by 5 days of strict mask-wearing, provided that they are fever-free for ≥ 24 hours without the use of medication and all other symptoms have improved. Quarantine time may be extended to the full 10 days if staff is displaying symptoms after the initial 5 days of quarantining at home.

If a client has met with a staff member who later tested positive, during our case notification process we will provide the exposed client with the information and resources needed to access testing. Persons who have had recent confirmed or suspected exposure to an infected person should wear a mask for 10 days around others when indoors in public and should receive testing ≥ 5 days after exposure (or sooner if they are symptomatic), irrespective of their vaccination status.

Please notify our Chief Operating Officer, Vilma Martinez Dominguez at vmartinezdominguez@glcac.org or the Director of Human Resources, Booster Rothenberg at NRothenberg@glcac.org if a staff member and/or a client has tested positive for COVID so that they can notify the appropriate staff while maintaining confidentiality. This is a responsibility

for all to protect our health and safety and to help stop the spread of the virus in our Agency and Community.

The Resurgence protocol, which replaces the “Protocol for the Reopening of All GLCAC Facilities for Clients’ Services” issued on March 25, 2022, was updated on August 15, 2022, following the release of new COVID-19 guidelines by the CDC and the State of Massachusetts. This document will continue to be reviewed and updated regularly based on the issuance of other future COVID-19 guidelines by the federal, state, and local public health entities to improve building operations.