



At EveryStep Newsletter Our Response to COVID-19

A Letter from the Desk of Tray Wade

EveryStep's top priority is, and always will be, the safety and health of its employees, volunteers and the people in our care.

This is no different as we face the COVID-19 pandemic.

EveryStep stands beside our employees, volunteers and the people we serve, and we are taking steps to ensure our programs continue to offer care and support to our patients, clients and their families throughout the COVID-19 situation.



As the situation with COVID-19 changes, EveryStep has taken daily steps to make sure our workforce is informed, healthy and prepared to respond.

On Sunday, March 15, EveryStep activated its Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) under which the organization will take measured and vital steps to ensure the safety of our staff, volunteers, clients, patients and their families. While we continue to operate many of our programs and services as normal, some, including support groups and scheduled events, have been impacted by

the new situation and have been postponed or canceled through at least May 16.

You can find a detailed list of these steps, responses and resources on our [website](#). Please check this [page](#) frequently to stay up-to-date on EveryStep's changing processes and preparations.

To support EveryStep during this difficult time, please contact EveryStep Foundation at events@everystep.org or consider making a [donation online](#).

If you haven't already connected with us on social media, now is the time. You'll see up-to-date information about what is happening at EveryStep. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#).

Thank you,
Tray

Game On! Helping Families Move Forward! has been postponed



EveryStep's top priority is the safety and health of its employees, volunteers, the people in our care, and the people who support us.

With that in mind, we have made the decision to postpone our April 16th Game On! event. As soon as a new date is established, we will share event details via email, website and social media.

Please know that now, more than ever, EveryStep needs your support! Our services help vulnerable patients and clients – many of whom could be most affected by the COVID-19 outbreak or inability to access daily vital needs.

EveryStep is making every endeavor to ensure continued health care and support to everyone in our care, and our people and programs are working collaboratively and creatively to deliver upon our mission!



EveryStep Hospice's 4th Annual BucketBash event in Creston, which was scheduled for April 30, has also been postponed in light of the current COVID-19 situation.

While do not yet have a new date for the event, we will keep you updated on details via email, website and social media. Find future details [online](#).

EveryStep's COVID-19 Response

Over the weekend the situation around COVID-19 in Iowa changed when the Governor and the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) communicated that an individual tested positive for the Coronavirus through “community spread,” meaning they did not contract the virus abroad.

In light of this, IDPH made several recommendations and based on their new position. As a result, EveryStep activated its Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP), effective Sunday, March 15, 2020.

Employee Preparations and Prevention

As part of EveryStep's EPP, staff will be tasked with following new health protocols for their own health and that of our patients and clients.

The following measures are now required:

- All EveryStep staff who are not self-isolating at home and are coming into a work location or completing home visits are required to record daily temperature and absence of COVID-19 symptoms, and report any COVID-19 symptoms each morning to their immediate supervisors. Staff are not permitted to enter a work location and/or patient/client home until or unless they are fever- and symptom-free for at least 48 hours (without medication).
 - If an employee has immediate family members who are experiencing fever, COVID-19 symptoms and/or have an exposure to or an active COVID-19 diagnosis while living in same dwelling, the employee will need to self-isolate by staying home.
 - All EveryStep staff are provided information about the risk factors for contracting COVID-19. Employees are asked to self-select and signal to their supervisors if they are identifying with factors that are high risk (such as being 60 years of age or older and certain types of health conditions). Individuals who have signaled high risk status will be accommodated and supported for any request for accomplishing social distancing.
 - EveryStep employees are expected to practice respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene.
 - EveryStep is also honoring the practices and protocols put in place by its community healthcare partners.
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Public Access To EveryStep's Locations

We have made the decision to close all EveryStep offices to the public, EXCEPT the following locations:

- **EveryStep's 9th Street offices, 1111, 9th St., Des Moines**
- **EveryStep's Bright Kavanagh Center, 3000 Easton Blvd, Des Moines**
- **Kavanagh House on 56th Street, 900 56th St., Des Moines**
- **Greater Regional Hospice Home, 1111 Country Club Dr., Creston**

Our offices in Centerville, Council Bluffs, Creston, Knoxville, Mount Ayr, Mt. Pleasant, Osceola, West Des Moines and Winterset will continue to have vital staff presence, can be reached by phone or fax, and will accept critical deliveries of supplies. However, the offices will not be open to the general public.

Hospice House Changes

Effective March 17, EveryStep is implementing new visitor guidelines at its Kavanagh House on 56th Street in Des Moines and Greater Regional Hospice Home in Creston.

Due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus:

- We are limiting entry to only two visitors for each patient at a time.
- Because children don't always show typical symptoms of the virus (fever and cough), we are limiting access to adults 18 years or older. We recognize that it may be important for some children to visit a loved one for healthy grieving and closure. If a visitor feels such a need exists, they are asked to speak with the hospice house director or other leader on staff, who can safely accommodate the request.
- EveryStep staff are screening all visitors as they enter our hospice houses for possible COVID-19 exposure or symptoms. Anyone who may have been exposed to COVID-19 or is symptomatic in any way, will be asked leave, with EveryStep's sincerest apologies for the hardship and our offers to help bridge communication between the visitor and the patient.
- Anyone visiting patients – staff and visitors - must wash or sanitize their hands prior to entering a patient room.

Visit our website for our evolving response to COVID-19

Volunteer Programs Suspended

Effective March 17, EveryStep has made the decision to suspend any volunteer services that involve in-person interactions, until further notice.

Out of an abundance of caution volunteers will no longer provide visits to patients through our Home Care, Hospice, Senior Companion, EveryStep Giving Tree thrift store, Amanda the Panda and other volunteer-supported programs and services.

EveryStep leaders are working to creatively identify other ways in which volunteers can support EveryStep programs during the COVID-19 crisis, while honoring social distancing protocols. If you have any ideas, questions or concerns, please reach out to EveryStep at info@everystep.org.

For more information on EveryStep's COVID-19 response, including program and service changes, please continuously visit our dedicated [COVID-19 webpage](#).

EveryStep Care & Support Services: We are a family of non-profit health care and support services offering compassion and guidance during life's most challenging moments.

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