Letter from the CEO

Dear Catholic Charities Friends, Supporters, Volunteers and Advocates,

Each day, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Paterson, provides help and creates hope for thousands of individuals in need. The health, well-being and safety of our vulnerable service recipients and of our employees is always our top priority. Many of our programs operate 365 days a year, 24 hours per day, including during times of crisis.

We have been closely following the developments with regard to coronavirus (COVID-19), since it began to spread globally. We have been working with federal, state, and local officials to learn as much as we can and enact important measures to help save lives, and do our part in stopping the spread of this pandemic.

To date, we have implemented many precautions to keep both the individuals we serve and our staff team safe.

This is a rapidly-evolving situation and we will be working collaboratively and nonstop to best help those in our communities.

If you are a family member of a loved one, in need of help or have any general questions please email: info@ccpaterson.org.

Catholic Charities employees and volunteers can email HRTeam@ccpaterson.org for questions about anything employment or volunteer related.

Here are some of the measures are currently taking:

- We have been working closely and have been in correspondence with the Diocese of Paterson, Catholic Charities USA, the Community Foodbank of New Jersey, the Department of Human Services, the Division of Developmental Disabilities, the CDC, the Health Department, St. Joseph’s Health, and many other local, state and federal offices and representatives.

- At this time, we are unaware of any company personnel being infected with the COVID-19 virus. We are asking staff to begin self-monitoring of their own health, which many of us have already put into practice. We are asking all staff to increase their preventive measure by monitoring themselves and/or family for a fever and flu like symptoms.
Temperatures should be documented and any temp of 100.4 or higher is to be reported immediately to your healthcare provider. Staff who are ill must stay home and notify their doctor for further guidance. Specific medical information should only be shared with Human Resources as needed - you should notify your supervisor in advance if you calling out sick but any specifics should only be shared with HR. Catholic Charities employees and volunteers can email: HRTeam@ccpaterson.org.

- **The following special events and fundraisers have been canceled or postponed:**

  o March 16th and 17th CC Job Fairs – Cancelled. Those looking for a career opportunity can apply online at www.ccpaterson.org/careers
  o March 28th – Veterans Stakeholders Breakfast – Postponed. This event will now take place on September 12th at the Brownstone in Paterson.
  o As of today, we are planning to move forward with our future fundraising events during the summer and fall, including our June 22nd Wiegand Farm Golf Classic. We will reevaluate our planned larger gatherings as we approach event dates.

- If there is a confirmed case of the Coronavirus at a single location of Catholic Charities the local Health Department will be notified of positive results. Recommendations of the Health Department related to quarantine of close contacts will be followed. Quarantine at the affected program may be required.

- If there is an outbreak of coronavirus at any of our Early Learning Programs (ELPs) the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the local Health Department, the Department of Children and Families Office of Licensing (OOL), and the Paterson Public Schools Department of Early Childhood Education (PPS-DECE) will be notified of positive results. Recommendations of the Health Department related to quarantine of close contacts will be followed.

- The New Jersey Department of Labor (DOL) released information about state benefits and protections afforded to New Jersey employees amid the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The DOL guidance provides clarity to New Jersey employers as they work to address the rapidly evolving challenges posed by COVID-19.

- We are working to move any organization-wide business related, in-person meetings to conference or video calls and are evaluating the use of remote access for our employees who are able to work remotely.

- For information about specific programs and agencies please see below:
The Department for Persons with Disabilities (DPD)

*DPD helps hundreds of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities each day.*

As you may know, the individuals helped by DPD’s group homes and Gruenert Center vocational day program are prone to illness more so than the general public. Some just because of the nature of their disability and for others this is compounded by their age. It is with their well-being in mind that we are:

- Retraining all staff in proper universal precautions, handwashing, use of gloves, social distancing, etc.
- Reminding all clients of handwashing, good hygiene, personal space/social distancing and no direct contact with others.
- Regular cleaning and disinfecting of all high touch areas throughout all of our programs.
- Suspending all non-essential community outings.
- Limiting visitors including the suspension of volunteer visits
- Gruenert Center in Lake Hopatcong has closed for the foreseeable future
- In addition, CARE, Scouts, Saturdays at the Center (SATC) and Fight for the Right will not meet until further notice.
- Our Support Coordination team will conduct monthly contacts, quarterly and annual visits by phone or video conference instead of face-to-face whenever possible until advised otherwise.

CFCS

*Catholic Family and Community Services helps people of all ages and offers case management services, 5 early learning programs, senior services, assistance for Veterans, 3 food pantries and much more.*

Here are some of the measures we have taken across Catholic Family and Community Services:

- Preventative measures have been put in place with the enhancement of cleaning services at all CFCS buildings, throughout our 3 counties.
- Retraining all staff in proper universal precautions, handwashing, use of gloves, social distancing, etc.
- Reminding all service recipients and students of handwashing, good hygiene, personal space/social distancing and no direct contact with others.
- We have requested guidance from all regulatory, State, County and City Board of Health, and are following guidelines set forth, with regard to closures or disruptions in service.
- Meals On Wheels Program in Sussex County:
  - Our agency has not yet received any specific instructions from Sussex County to follow in case of an outbreak of COVID-19 virus.
  - We are planning on continuing these services to help feed the hungry:
  - If any of the drivers is absent due to being affected by the virus, Catholic Family & Community Services will provide a substitute (volunteer or employee) to deliver the meals.
If there is a client confirmed to have the COVID-19 virus, CFCS staff will still deliver the meal but will be left on the front door of their residence. Client will be notified via phone call once the meal is delivered.

Catholic Charities operates 3 food pantries throughout 3 counties, and our plan as of today is to keep these open during this crisis:

- We operate community choice pantries, but for the foreseeable future we will be pre-bagging food so that service recipients spend less time at the pantry.
- As you may have realized supermarket shelves are currently barren. This crisis will undoubtedly cause a food shortage for our pantries.
- To learn how you can contribute, please visit www.ccpaterson.org/relief

**Straight and Narrow**

*Straight and Narrow is the largest nonprofit drug and alcohol treatment center in the country, helping 1,200 in recovery people each day.*

Straight & Narrow is taking the recent information with regard to the Coronavirus seriously and we are ensuring that a medical preparedness plan is in place

- Retraining all staff in proper universal precautions, handwashing, use of gloves, social distancing, etc.
- Reminding all clients of handwashing, good hygiene, personal space/social distancing and no direct contact with others.
- La Vida Childcare Centers: Guidance and direction provided by Paterson Public Schools and the Department of Education shall be followed for all students.
- The admission department has implemented a screening at time of admission to assess incoming clients for signs and symptoms. Screening includes assessment of flu-like symptoms, cough, temperature, etc. Travel of any of the affected areas is evaluated for the individual as well as if they have been in contact with anyone who may have traveled to any of the affected areas. Anyone presenting with the above symptoms shall be sent to St. Joseph’s Hospital Emergency Room for precautionary measures prior to admission. Upon receipt of medical clearance the admission process will resume.
- Family visits are being suspended as a precautionary measure to ensure the safety of our client's and staff.
- Client’s with confirmed cases of infection shall be treated and quarantined at St. Joseph’s Hospital. Further guidance regarding medical protocol on-site will be guided with information from the Paterson Board of Health, NJ Department of Health, Office of Licensing, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Drug Court, Division of Children and Families and the Intoxicated Drivers Program.
- Preventative measures are being put in place effective immediately with the enhancement of cleaning services at the 396 residential building. Additionally, operations/maintenance staff shall meet with the Directors of Residential Living to ensure that all units are equipped with proper cleaning supplies and reinforce proper
cleaning protocol. Daily schedules have been sent to the residential units which are to be implemented and followed.

Here are some helpful websites and links for our employees and followers:

- New Jersey Department of Health: [www.nj.gov/health/](http://www.nj.gov/health/)
- Community Foodbank of New Jersey: [www.cfbnj.org/coronavirus](http://www.cfbnj.org/coronavirus)
- Catholic Charities USA Staff Resources: [www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/resource/covid-19/](http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/resource/covid-19/)
- Diocese of Paterson Website including measures to be taken Diocesan-wide with regard to Coronavirus: [www.rcdop.org](http://www.rcdop.org)

Questions or Concerns:

Employees and Volunteers can email: HRTeam@ccpaterson.org

General questions from service recipient family members or those looking to help can email: info@ccpaterson.org

We will do everything we can to help you and answer your questions during this challenging time.

We recognize that this is an evolving situation, and our action plan will continue to evolve with the changing environment. We assure you that we will work tirelessly to help those most in need. Thank you for your continued support, consideration, prayers and love. God bless you all.

Sincerely,

Scott Milliken
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Paterson
Chief Executive Officer