**The Arc Carroll County**

**Social Distancing Policy**

**PURPOSE**

In an increasingly global and highly interconnected world, infectious diseases like influenza can spread with lightning speed causing widespread illness and death. In the event of a pandemic or other health crisis, it is The Arc’s responsibility to take measures to protect its staff, clients and their families from potential exposure to disease. One such measure is social distancing.

**POLICY**

In the event of an outbreak of a highly infectious and/or deadly disease, including a pandemic, The Arc will enact its Social Distancing Policy in an attempt to limit the spread of disease through human to human contact. Actions to minimize contact between infected and healthy individuals will range from the use of sick time, limitation or cancellation of events or localized closing, and suspension of all services and operations. The Executive Director will determine which level of social distancing is needed to protect employees of The Arc.

**DEFINITIONS**

Social Distancing is a public health practice designed to limit the spread of infection by ensuring sufficient physical distance between individuals. Taking measures to ensure social distancing decreases opportunities for close contact among persons, thereby decreasing the potential for disease transmission among people and slowing the spread of disease.

Social distancing measures may include:

* Maintaining a personal distance between oneself and a person showing symptoms of illness.
* Recommended minimum distance is six (6) feet. Personal contact can be further minimized by avoiding shaking hands and by scheduling meetings via the phone or web.
* Maintaining significant personal distance from coworkers and clients via the use of sick time when you are experiencing symptoms of illness.
* Limiting public events, including civic, cultural, athletic, educational, social, and others.
* Cancelling public events
* Suspending all but critical operations.

**PROCEDURES**

* In the event of a pandemic or other health emergency, the Executive Director, in consultation with other Arc Leadership as needed, will determine the appropriate level of social distancing measures to employ. Federal, state, and local governing authorities may provide guidance in making the determination, and those authorities are likely to follow Center for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines.
* Decisions regarding social distancing for an outbreak of influenza or other highly contagious disease will be guided by such factors as the epidemiology of the disease, its response (if any) to anti-viral or other medications, the availability of effective medications, specific at-risk groups, proximity of confirmed infection to a particular locale, and other factors.
* In support of decisions made by The Arc leaders regarding social distancing, the Human Resources Department will develop specific protocols which will address the nature and severity of the health emergency. These protocols may establish new guidelines or may modify existing policies and procedures such as those related to leaves, return to work requirements, notification, remote access, and others. Protocols will be developed in consultation with all relevant departments. These protocols may be in effect for no more than 90 days without approval of senior leaders.

**AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT NOT AFFECTED**

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary stated in this policy, nothing herein is intended to alter the at-will status of any staff member. The Arc at all times retains the right to terminate any staff member at any time for any lawful reason, or for no reason at all.