



June 24, 2022

Re: The FriendShip's COVID-19 Guidance Update (High Community Level)  
From: The FriendShip's Board of Directors  
To: Members and Volunteers

The FriendShip is continuing to monitor the situation related to COVID-19 in our area. Richland County has recently moved from the CDC community level of “medium” back to “high.” In response to this change, The FriendShip has updated our safety precautions as listed below, effective immediately. The situation will continue to be regularly reassessed by the Board and its Ad Hoc Health & Safety Committee. As we monitor the situation in our area, we will work to continue to balance the need for safety precautions and our ability to provide the services and programs that are so vital to our members. **If you have questions about the information below or need help accessing resources, please contact The FriendShip office at 803-602-6434. We are here to help!**

The CDC offers the following guidance for people living in a community at the “high” level:

- Wear a mask indoors in public.
- Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines.
- Get tested if you have symptoms.
- Consider additional precautions if you are at high risk for severe illness.

**Our expectation is that all members and volunteers will stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines.** In addition, please follow the guidelines below:

- **Mask wearing is required** – The FriendShip requires that all members and volunteers (including those who are fully immunized) who are able wear a mask during all programs, meetings, and services (including inside vehicles).
  - It is critical that masks are worn correctly, consistently covering the nose and mouth.
  - Upgrade to a higher quality mask, if at all possible. The CDC guidance relating to masks notes that different types of masks provide different levels

of protection; well-fitting KN95s and “NIOSH-approved respirators (including N95s)” offer the highest levels of protection. The FriendShip office has (a limited number of) these masks available for members/volunteers who need them.

- **Keep physical distancing, where possible** – Physical distancing of six feet will be maintained to the extent possible in meetings and programs. Advance notice will be provided to members and volunteers of programs during which physical distancing may be limited. During transportation services, please understand that some members or volunteers may be more comfortable with passengers in the backseat. Please share any such preferences with the office when making service requests.
- **Be mindful of other safety precautions for gatherings**
  - Activities involving eating or drinking are temporarily suspended.
  - With the above protections in place, in-person meetings and programs may cautiously continue with physical distancing.
- **Follow the CDC’s guidelines** – The FriendShip will follow, at a minimum, the CDC’s Guidance related to COVID-19 safety practices. Please refer to the CDC for information related to such things as exposure, isolation, and quarantine guidance. (See note below related to cancelling services if you have symptoms, have tested positive, or have had a close contact exposure.)
- **Take advantage of COVID-19 testing options** – If you have been or may have been exposed, please take advantage of local testing options. You can also visit COVIDtests.gov to order free at-home tests.
- **Cancel services when needed** – Cancel services if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to COVID-19. Note: If you have tested positive or had a close contact exposure, please refrain from receiving or providing services for a period of ten days.

Please continue to use good judgement and err on the side of caution. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do for one another. The FriendShip truly has been and continues to be a source of strength for our members and volunteers.

Last updated:        June 24, 2022  
                              June 6, 2022  
                              April 18, 2022  
                              March 11, 2022  
                              January 20, 2022  
                              September 17, 2021  
                              August 20, 2021