

# Health and Safety Caregiver Policies

*Last Update: October 31, 2020*

Gateway has implemented health and safety measures to protect your family and our staff. This document outlines the safeguards that we ask Gateway clients and staff to follow. The information contained in this document reflects our current policies as of the above date, however our health and safety guidelines are periodically updated. The most up to date policy information can always be found on the “Health and Safety” page of our website at [www.gatewaylg.com](http://www.gatewaylg.com).

**Green Highlights** = material new content since last version of document

## Client / Caregiver Safeguards:

### 1. ABA Session Workspace Safety

- Personal Health:
  - Sessions must be cancelled if the child or anyone in the caregiver’s home is demonstrating any signs of illness (including mild symptoms such as a runny nose or light cough), or if anyone in the home is under a quarantine recommendation by a physician. To notify us of any of these conditions, please email Gateway’s cancellations team: [cancellations@gatewaylg.com](mailto:cancellations@gatewaylg.com).
    - Please follow [CDC guidelines](#) for resumption of sessions if a member of your household is demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19.
  - Prior to the start of each face-to-face therapy session, the Gateway clinician will stand outside of the caregiver’s home and ask a caregiver the following screening questions. If a caregiver answers “no” to any of these questions, the clinician will inform the caregiver that the therapy appointment can not take place today and will report the reason for session cancellation to the supervising BCBA and [cancellations@gatewaylg.com](mailto:cancellations@gatewaylg.com).
    - Are all members of your household currently healthy, with no signs of illness (including mild symptoms such as a runny nose or light cough)?
    - Do you have bleach-, alcohol- or ammonia-based cleaning products that I may use for my workspace?
    - Do you have soap and paper towels in your bathroom and may I use your bathroom to wash my hands?

- Limiting Circulation of Materials: Our staff will not circulate materials between homes. If an instructional material is brought to your home for your child's treatment program, it will be disinfected prior to your child's use and will remain in your home until your child has finished using it for treatment.
- Sanitization:
  - We ask that caregivers have disinfectant cleaning products (bleach-, alcohol- or ammonia-based) and paper towels in their home and use these cleaning products to wipe down all therapy surfaces and toys immediately prior to the start of each ABA therapy session. These cleaning products should be available to our BT(s) so that they also can clean their workspace.
  - A bathroom with hand soap must be accessible for our staff to access.
  - Access to hand sanitizer is preferred but not required.
- Social Distancing: All family members of the caregiver's household (adults and children), other than the child receiving therapy, must maintain a 6+ feet of social distancing from our therapist throughout the appointment (exclusive of behavior escalations that require parent/caregiver support). Any family members age 2 and up who are in the same room as a Gateway therapist must wear a mask or other face covering. For clients who are not yet able to tolerate wearing a mask, this skill should be addressed during therapy sessions and should be included as a goal in the child's ABA treatment plan. Exemptions may be made when the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication. A parent or clinician who would like to request an exemption for client mask-wearing for the purpose of furthering a specific treatment goal should address the request with the child's supervising BCBA. Exemptions must be implemented in the safest manner possible, including limited duration (e.g., only those treatment programs that require seeing the mouth) and increased social distancing.
- In keeping with the [CDC's recommendations](#), the use of masks with exhalation valves or vents is not permitted.
- School and Other Group Session Locations: Gateway will permit sessions to be held in school and other childcare group settings as they begin to reopen, in keeping with local jurisdiction health and safety requirements.
- Other Community Session Locations: At this time, sessions are not permitted to be held in any indoor restaurant locations. Sessions may be held at outdoor establishments or other indoor community locations (e.g., museums, stores) provided a BCBA approves the location as clinically appropriate.

## 2. Contact Minimization

- No Subbing: In an effort to limit points of contact, Gateway is suspending all short-term sub placements. We may assign a long-term sub if a BT is absent for 1 week.
- Maximizing Telehealth: Where possible, BCBA's will provide supervision services (Parent Training and Behavior Technician Direction) via Telehealth. When appropriate, Direct Therapy via telehealth may be recommended for your child.

## 3. Precautions for At-Risk Population

- Should anyone reside in the caregiver's home who is considered to be at-risk for COVID-19 (e.g., over the age of 60, heart/respiratory issues, immuno-compromised,

pregnant) the caregiver is consenting to accepting the extra risk to this individual associated with by consenting to ABA therapy services being provided in the home.

## **Staff Safeguards:**

### **1. Each day, prior to entering a client's home**

- Our staff will take their temperature and ask themselves the following questions. Should they answer “yes” to any of them, they may not engage in direct sessions.
  - Do you currently demonstrate any symptoms of COVID-19?
  - Has a health professional recommended that you be under quarantine?
  - Have you been in contact with any persons exhibiting [symptoms of COVID-19](#) or persons who are within 14 days of recovery from a COVID-19 infection?
- Prior to each session, staff will sanitize any of the limited materials that they are bringing into the home: e.g., iPad, personal phone - for emergencies, paper data sheets, pen and water bottle.

### **2. Upon entering a client's home**

- Staff will not shake hands, fist bump or use any physical greeting.
- Staff will wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds and dry hands with a paper towel.
- Staff will identify their work area - preferably a single room and to the extent possible, contain their services to this pre-defined work area.
- Staff will sanitize the work area (eg table, chairs, floor space) and instructional materials provided by the client using products supplied by the caregiver.
  - Staff will carefully examine the provided cleaning product and ensure the active ingredient is bleach, ammonia or alcohol-based.

### **3. During Session**

- Staff are required to wear a cloth face covering and may choose to wear gloves during therapy session time.
  - Please talk with your BCBA if you believe your child would benefit from a desensitization training.
- Staff will avoid unnecessary physical contact with the client (no hugs or high fives, no sitting in lap when reading a story).
- Staff will practice social distancing with caregivers- remaining 6+ feet away from all individuals in the home except for the individual that they are treating (exclusive of behavior escalations that require parent/caregiver support).
- Wash their hands every ~30 minutes and before/after handling any food.
- Keep Gateway/personal items out of the client's reach.
- Avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth as much as possible.
- Refrain from using their personal phone device, except in cases of emergencies.

### **4. Departing from Session**

- Staff will sanitize any Gateway or personal material that the client might have touched during the session (e.g., ipad, water bottle).
- Staff will sanitize the work area (e.g., table, chairs, floor space) and instructional materials provided by the client using products supplied by the caregiver.
- Staff will wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before leaving the client's home.
- Staff will use a clean paper towel, tissue or napkin to open doors on their way out of the home.

*If it comes to a client's attention that a staff member on their team is not following any of the above procedures, the client should notify the supervising BCBA immediately.*