***The Adjustment to Vision Loss Does Not Stop—Neither Will We.***

Dear Friends,

As you are aware, organizations everywhere are managing the impact of the ongoing pandemic on their workplaces. Each passing day brings new developments. Here at The Carroll Center for the Blind, our top priority remains the health and well-being of our consumers, employees, volunteers, business partners, and the communities we serve.

During the week of March 16th, The Carroll Center closed its Newton campus and ceased all face-to-face instruction, including instruction in the community. The following week, the Center launched virtual remote training for all clients who were engaged in rehabilitation, technology, and educational services. Since then, there has been a surge in requests—especially around technology—for remote instruction. Today, the dedicated Carroll Center team continues to support school-aged students, adults, and seniors with instruction, counseling, and resource help during this difficult time. To view a full list of the different topics for remote instruction and assistance that are currently being provided to individuals (and family members) who need [skills and support at home, please click here](https://carroll.org/remote-instruction-and-support-topics-during-covid-19/).

Here are some examples of current instruction taking place:

* Group Zoom instruction
* Braille and braille device instruction for school-aged students and young adults
* Labeling instruction over the phone to help seniors organize their home
* Zoom or FaceTime instruction for proper use of low vision devices
* Travel planning and use of travel apps for adults

The Carroll Center is thrilled to report that, to date, no staff members have tested positive for COVID-19 and that everyone is closely following governmental and public health guidelines to remain proactive. We continue to monitor the health and safety of our consumers while assisting them with necessary supports and information.

It is remarkable how eager most clients are to return to our campus for transformative services or welcome us into their homes and community when it is deemed safe to do so. Interest in returning and attending adult and youth programs has not wavered. During this pandemic, social isolation is even more heightened for the newly blind and those with vision loss.

Despite the many challenges before us, we are proud to report that the Carroll Center’s team is at full strength and our service delivery continues in all areas. As each week goes by, the focus remains on what service delivery will be like when we all can return to a new normal. The Carroll Center’s leadership team is reviewing many strategies and preparing best practices, while heeding the advice of local, state and federal government officials and public health agencies.

To protect the health and safety of our consumers, staff, volunteers and business partners, The Carroll Center has and will continue to take the necessary steps and modifications to our operations to prepare for reopening.

Here are just a few steps we have already taken and preparedness efforts for s safe reopening:

* A deep cleaning of all spaces at our Newton campus, including; Electrostatic disinfecting using Clorox 360, carpet cleaning and extraction, tile strip and wax, and a deep clean of all touch points and horizontal surfaces with Sporicidin.
* Procuring and distributing appropriate personal protective equipment to staff and clients once face-to-face instruction can resume.
* Implementing a phased return-to-work approach, limiting the number of employees and clients on campus, practicing social distancing as much as possible, limiting group assembly, continuing to provide remote work and instruction opportunities, and much more. Careful policies are under development to limit outside visitors into our campus buildings in an effort to control traffic and promote the highest level of infection control practices.

While Massachusetts businesses are now scheduled to open on May 18th, we know that date could be extended. When we do open, we will have increased daily cleaning and disinfecting, hand sanitization available in all buildings, and necessary social distancing protocols in place. Initially, there will be no group meetings or group meal gatherings. Until deemed safe, Orientation & Mobility instruction will not take place on public transportation or shopping areas, rather providing most instruction outside and away from others.

Safety will continue to be our highest priority to ensure the health and well-being of staff and our consumers. Best practices will be utilized in all areas of our operations and instruction to help each client achieve their goals in the best environment of care possible.

If you have any questions about how The Carroll Center for the Blind can help, whether on-campus or remotely, please feel free to contact us at 800-852-3131 or visit our website at [www.carroll.org](https://www.carroll.org/). Our management team is always available to answer any questions or concerns. Our Director of Admissions, Kathy Felt, is at the ready to connect you to our critical and transformative services for All Ages and All Stages of Vision Loss.

Best Regards,

**Dina Rosenbaum, M.Ed.**

**Chief Program Officer**