

Your help needed - homemade masks and donations

Opportunity Partners' on-site day programs remain closed, impacting 750 people with disabilities who are now home all day and 200 of our staff who are currently furloughed or working reduced hours during this global health crisis.

However, we continue to provide vital care to nearly 400 people in our group homes and other residential programs, as well as in our job support programs. We're helping people stay safe at home, guiding those who need to apply for unemployment, and coaching individuals still employed in essential services. We also have a dedicated crew of OP staff working safely to complete packaging projects for businesses deemed critical.

Many of you have asked how you can help.

With our day programs comprising 60 percent of OP's annual revenue, our continued closure could be financially devastating to OP and organizations like ours. We need donations now to keep OP financially viable as we move forward, and to ensure we are ready to serve the disability community when it is safe to fully open again.

OP is also seeking alternative facemasks to be worn by our direct care staff. The Minnesota Department of Health has provided guidance on homemade or manufactured facemasks that are not U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved, but could be worn by asymptomatic staff who have not had exposures known to COVID-19 and in other circumstances. They can also be worn by workers who do not have direct care responsibilities.

OP hopes to collect 400-500 alternative facemasks from our community. Learn more from the Minnesota Department of Health, including protocols for when we can use the masks and instructions to sew homemade masks. We've heard elastic may be in short supply, so here are instructions for masks without elastic.

If you are willing to make homemade masks, please email info@opportunities.org for next steps.

We are all in this together, and we are committed to serving our community in the best ways that we can now and into the future. Stay strong, everyone!
