



July 8, 2020

Dear all Residents of RiverWoods Exeter, RiverWoods Durham, and Birch Hill,

As we approach the next phase of operations we have heard from many residents who are concerned that the change in guidelines that we announced last week will bring more risk to the communities. To be sure, any additional travel outside of our buildings brings more risk, and the community bears the risk of any action taken by its members. This memo will serve as further explanation of our decision and also a clarification of our expectations as we move forward. We have included a few charts at the end to help you understand risk and options.

As we have noted, our goal is to use the data available to help us take the emotion out of the “opening” decisions, and we have used the seven-day average for “new cases” and “active cases” in New Hampshire as our guide. The data comes from the interactive map provided by WMUR and from information provided by the NH Department of Public Health, as well as information provided by the New York Times and the Department of Public Health from other New England states.

- As of July 7th, the seven-day average continues steady at approximately 23 new cases per day for the last few weeks, from a seven-day average high of nearly 90 per day in late May.
- The number of active cases in New Hampshire is 790, from a high of nearly 2,300 in mid-May. Active cases have stayed below 1,000 since mid-June. Meaning that more cases are being cleared (people are recovering) than new cases are occurring.
- MA, RI, and CT are showing a steadying of new cases. ME and VT show a slight increase, but their overall numbers are very low, with VT having had no new cases for one day.

Additionally, in the past few weeks we have had three instances of some sort of positive case in our Independent Living homes, one at each community. RWD and

BH have each had an independent living resident test positive, and late last week RWE had an independent living staff member test positive. The RWE staff member had very limited contact with other staff and residents, and we tested staff members and residents based on contact tracing. We have not yet received all results, but those we have received have been negative. The positive Independent living cases have been very contained issues. This leads us to believe that our internal policies (disinfection, mask wearing, distancing) are working. While this is certainly not a scientific study, we have talked to other friends in the industry and they have had the same or similar experiences; spread on the independent side of the communities is quite low.

This data points to *relative* safety in local travel and local activity. That is good news.

However, as you know from the media, case counts in many other states are increasing; some rapidly. This is a real concern, as states begin to open more and some people do not obey the guidelines regarding wearing a mask and maintaining social distance. With summer here and vacationers coming to our state and others in the New England region, we will continue to track new cases and active cases to see if we will be impacted.

There is no doubt the rising case counts around the country are concerning. The Northeast region seems to have stabilized, but the data shows that we clearly have not defeated this virus nationwide. **If New Hampshire or the New England region shows a large increase in case counts we will tighten back up.** We will have to live alongside this virus for a while, but we have to live in a way that allows us freedoms and reduces risk. Most of the virus impacts are beyond our control, but we will continue to be methodical and thoughtful in the areas where we do have control – things like mask wearing and social distancing and keeping interactions in our buildings limited.

Our goal in “opening” is to provide you with more freedom to make good decisions for yourself and your neighbors. Last week, Jan Sanborn, a RW Exeter resident, sent me the following quote *“Freedom is not the right to do as we please, but the opportunity to do what is right.”* I think that is a perfect quote for times like these. So, a few pointers, if you are to leave campus to reengage with “daily life:”

- Restaurants, bars and other places where people congregate are a very bad idea; indoors and outdoors. You may really want to be served a meal, but airflow, the impact of other people, and not knowing who was there before you all lead this to be a very poor choice for now.
- Travel outside of the northern New England states brings a lot more risk. We are doing well in New England now, but that could change if we see an uptick in new cases.
- Being in vacation areas of any sort may bring increased risk. Even if **you** are staying in New England states with low case counts, you don't know where the other vacationers have come from ... people are germy. Stay away from them!
- Grocery stores and other retail establishments – we still recommend that you use contactless pickup if that is available. This is the time to use every option that reduces risk, so avoid going into a store if you can. There are good safety precautions in many stores, (hand sanitizer, one-way aisles, limited shoppers) but the best option is to not enter.
- Visiting your family – here is one way to think about it – if your family and friends have been living safely and with a tight social circle then their home is probably a safe place to visit. If they haven't or aren't able to because of their job or the other people in their home, then have them come visit you here (outside) for now. And remember to wash your hands a lot around family... there tends to be more touching around people you love!

When you are home, in our communities:

- Wear your mask and remind your friends and neighbors to do the same. Your mask protects others and their mask protects you. Anything that keeps your microscopic spit from flying out and hitting someone else is a really good idea. So, wear your mask. And please know that if you forget you will be reminded by our staff or your neighbors.
- Keep six-feet of distance between you and others. We know this isn't possible 100% of the time, but try. Try hard. It helps.
- Wash your hands, a lot. It helps you and others. If you have been outside of our communities wash your hands on the way in. Wash your hands before you leave your apartment. Wash your hands when you return. And

don't touch your face (this is the hardest one for me, but I am working on it!).

- We are researching rapid testing machines, but there are two barriers to our purchasing one. First, the accuracy of the testing is not as high as a PCR test. While a positive test has a very high chance of being accurate, a negative test has a lower accuracy, in the 80% range versus PCR tests being in the high 90% range. That will give us more false negatives, and perhaps a false sense of security. Second, any test requires enough "viral upload" to detect the virus. We assume that will be five days. So, testing people when they return from a day out (or a trip) would not be effective. We continue to evaluate this option – but for now have not taken action.

In general, the risks you take impacts others, so take very few. Being around people you don't know (or don't know where they've been), people in large groups, sharing food, utensils, or space; being out in public without a mask; travelling to anywhere there are people who are not part of your tight social circle... these are all risky and a bad idea, and that will be for a while longer. Leaving campus without your mask or appropriate hand sanitizer is also a bad idea. Keep them with you, and the mask on your face, at all times when you are not alone (you do not need to drive with your mask on if you are by yourself or with your spouse/partner).

We will have to live alongside this virus until a vaccine is found. It isn't fun, but if we do things right it doesn't have to be completely restrictive. There are simple things we can do every day to mitigate our risks (wearing a mask – properly – over our mouth and nose, washing our hands, maintaining a six-foot distance from people not in our family unit, and keeping a very tight social circle). Additionally, though it may be little harder to hear someone who is wearing a mask, it is far safer to just speak louder. Pulling your mask down to speak is not a good choice.

As staff, we will remind you if you aren't adhering to these guidelines. That is our commitment to you. We will also have a supply of masks at the front desks. If your mask doesn't fit you properly just come exchange it. We will get you one that works better and is more comfortable. Your commitment to us (and to one another) should be to do the same, remind people of our guidelines. Remember, **your** mask protects your neighbors and **their** mask protects you. So, if you see

someone not wearing a mask, or not wearing it properly, remind them. It is just the smart thing to do.

One last word about the new guidelines – they align with where we are in the state and the region today. If things change, if case counts increase or the data points to more spread in our local towns and counties we will adjust (tighten up) again. In the meantime, as we wait for science to fully catch up please make good decisions for yourself, our staff, and your friends and neighbors. Now is the time to be measured in our steps toward a more normal daily life.

Stay healthy my friends!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justine Vogel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning of the first name.

Justine Vogel
TRWG CEO

These charts are for guidance – to help you understand what is safer or less safe as we begin to venture out of the communities. As we have noted ... outside is better than inside, few is better than many (in terms of people to be around), moving is better than stationary ... and the more you keep proper distance and wear your mask the better!

LOWEST RISK



HOME ALONE OR WITH HOUSEMATES

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Try to allow only people you live with into your home.
- Wash your hands.
- If you're sick, stay home and isolate from housemates.

MODERATE RISK



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

- Wash your hands and don't touch your face.
- Stay at least 6 feet from people you don't live with.
- Wear a mask.
- Avoid shared surfaces, like swings or benches.

HIGHER RISK



OUTDOOR GATHERINGS

- Wash your hands and don't touch your face.
- Stay at least 6 feet from people you don't live with.
- Wear a mask.
- Don't share food, toys, and other items, and avoid shared surfaces.
- Participate in events like these infrequently.

HIGHEST RISK



INDOOR GATHERINGS

- Wash your hands and don't touch your face.
- Stay at least 6 feet from people you don't live with.
- Wear a mask.
- Don't share food, toys, and other items, and avoid shared surfaces.
- Open windows for better ventilation.
- Try to avoid gathering indoors as much as possible.

Adapted from Julia Marcus, Harvard, and Eleanor Murray, Boston University



Taking a Drive	LOW RISK
Contactless Pickup at Retail Store, Pharmacy Pickup, Takeout Food	
Pumping Gas	
Hiking, Playing Tennis, Kayaking, Ocean Swimming (No Sunbathing)	
Playing Golf	LOW- MODERATE RISK
Libraries	
Walking with Others	
Grocery/Retail Shopping (Indoors)	
Doctor's Waiting Room	
Backyard BBQ (staying outside and maintaining 6ft distance)	
Beach (maintaining 6ft distance from nonfamily members)	
Swimming in a Public Pool (limiting time in locker room and using hand sanitizer after changing)	
Outdoor Gardens/Museums	
Dinner at a Family or Friend's House (inside)	
Bridge/Card Playing	
Hair & Nail Salons, Masseur (client and stylist wearing mask)	
Fitness Centers/Gyms	
Restaurant/Bar (indoor or outdoor)	HIGH RISK
Hugging or Shaking Hands	
Gatherings of >10 people that you don't know	
Weddings/Funerals/Memorial Services	
Public transportation of any sort (plane, train, bus, ride share, etc.)	
Movie Theater, Indoor Museums	
Sports Stadium/Music Concert/Political Rally	
Hotel	