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## COVID-19 Impact Update

In accordance with public health guidance, STRIVE is joining nationwide efforts to contain the spread of COVID 19. As a result our site is no longer providing direct services to individuals or groups on face to face basis. However we are delivering services virtually to support our community. As unemployment rates climb, the need for STRIVE is stronger than ever.

Currently the STRIVE Boston team is doing the following:

- A virtual class with our Adult workshop. Our Adult Workshop Facilitator is doing the job readiness curriculum on line with 4 clients.
- One of our youth Program Case Managers is doing a men's group with the young men in our youth program.
- We are also doing daily check-ins with clients to make sure that they are connected to the appropriate resources.
- The STRIVE Boston team is meeting once a week formally using Microsoft Teams to check in with each other and strategize.
- We are doing weekly check-ins with the STRIVE National team to share strategies from across the country as well as to take part in relevant training that can help us through this difficult time.
- Job Placement is still happening for our clients who have lost jobs and need to work.
- We are also providing assistance where necessary with helping clients understand and take part in the unemployment claims process as well as helping them navigate community resources.

And on the horizon, we are about to implement the following:

- A virtual young women's group
- A virtual jobs club (A conversation with clients about current listings and how those listings fit into their career plans.)

Each Case Manager is actively communicating with as many of their STRIVE clients, employers, school partners and other community collaterals as possible through the use of mobile device messaging applications, email, phone, and video calls. Yet communication with STRIVE clients is challenging right now. Some clients suddenly have inactive cell phone numbers or do not have their own personal mobile devices. Additionally, access to personal mobile devices such as SMART phones, tablets, and establishing connectivity to the internet is not an option right now. Covering basic needs is the priority.

In order for STRIVE clients to remain engaged with future employers, the SMART and Future Leaders group cohorts in addition to the industry credentialing components of the program, they need the capability to connect to virtual platforms through the internet such as Zoom (video conferencing), and Pen Foster (online industry credentialing program).

The STRIVE team is assessing the current technology needs of as many clients that can be reached by using a structured survey which can be completed on-line or over the phone. The assessment determines what devices people currently have access to and what their capabilities are for connecting to the internet for online learning. They are hearing about job losses and covering basic needs as grave concerns.

Specifically, the needs listed below were noted by the Case Managers:

- Gift cards for
  - Groceries - Market Basket, Shaw's, Stop and Shop, Target, Walmart, and popular convenience stores)
  - Pharmacies – CVS, Walgreens
  - Public transportation - MBTA Charlie Cards for bus and train fare, Uber, Lyft
  - Cell phone minutes
- Pay per use cell phones
- Internet plans
- Tablets/ Laptops

Our clients are some of the most vulnerable in the Commonwealth and we continue to be very grateful for the passion and generosity our supporters demonstrate to see them through this incredibly difficult time.

Sincerely,



Edward M. Powell, MPA

Vice President for Community Engagement, JRI/Executive Director, STRIVE Boston