



**HASA**

**Response to  
COVID-19  
Pandemic**

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**MAY 2020**



# HASA Leadership Response

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HASA recognizes that it is critical that everyone be able to communicate—to receive emergency announcements, work remotely, and stay connected with doctors, coworkers, and loved ones. HASA is committed to providing these invaluable connections and to the ongoing health and safety of our employees, clients, and community. While ensuring the highest quality service for our clients throughout this outbreak, we continue to help all to understand and be understood. HASA is both a service provider and employer in the region and we are working to take care of both our community and employees in these unpredictable times.

## Strategy

HASA leadership is committed to using the guiding principles of equity, compassion, and integrity to continue to be a healthy, responsive, and impactful organization during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has become clear that social distancing will extend well beyond the initial timeline and HASA is poised to serve our community throughout the entirety of this public health crisis. HASA is uniquely positioned to support children, families, and the older adult population during these times at which both groups are vulnerable. Ensuring that our most vulnerable clients have access to our tele-therapy and remote learning services is critical as we continue to safely serve clients and prepare for the predicted second wave of COVID-19.

## Safety & Operations

HASA is closely monitoring the spread of COVID-19 and any new legislation, regulations, and recommendations, committing to strict adherence to the CDC, Federal Government, and Maryland State guidelines. We are in close partnership with Maryland Nonprofits, the National Association of Speech and Hearing Centers (NASHC), the Maryland Department of Health, the Maryland State Department of Education, the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities, and other groups who are helping inform and guide our operations to ensure the safety and health of our community.

HASA implemented the following measures to ensure the health and safety of our clients, many of which will remain in place throughout the phased opening of Maryland's businesses:

- created a "curbside" hearing aid repair service while continuing to provide onsite audiology services at pediatric hospitals and nursing homes
- launched a HIPAA compliant teletherapy platform for speech and occupational therapy to provide teletherapy sessions
- developed a distance learning program for our Gateway students



- created virtual sign-language programming and interpreting
- supported individuals who are d/Deaf with onsite interpreting for acute medical issues requiring treatment inside area hospitals
- required personal protective equipment for all HASA staff (masks, gloves, and face shields for clinical team)
- reconfigured office space to ensure safe social distancing
- provided non-clinical staff with the resources required to telework

## Communications

HASA leadership and Board of Directors meet on a regular basis to strategize and respond to the needs of staff, patients, families, and the community. Launching a new website ([www.hasa.org](http://www.hasa.org)) is one way in which we are communicating COVID-19 updates; HASA.org includes a dedicated COVID-19 page and is continually

updated to reflect policies and best practices. In addition, the External Relations Department is posting messages on social media channels to inform our community of the services currently offered at HASA. These postings are in addition to the positive messages regularly posted intended to inspire, uplift, and educate during this challenging and unprecedented time.

## **Staff Support**

HASA is both a service provider and employer in the region and we are working to take care of both our community and employees in these unpredictable times. We have been serving Baltimore City since 1926 and employ 75 employees (and over 100 contractors) to provide care in the Baltimore metropolitan region. HASA is invested in the health and safety of our employees and secured Payroll Protection Program (PPP) funds through the CARES Act (approximately \$727K to support eight weeks of payroll for W2 employees and certain operational expenses). We implemented telework for all departments to limit the number of staff in our building while still staying productive. The Human Resources team works in collaboration with HASA's Employee Assistance Program to provide confidential counseling services free of charge to any employee in need.

## **Partnerships**

The Executive Director/CEO continues her participation in the LEADERSHIP 2020 cohort provided by the Greater Baltimore Committee to establish and expand relationships with business leaders in the community. The director of the sign language interpreting department has partnered with the Maryland Governor's Office of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing and the Maryland Association of the Deaf to provide a townhall for individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing to learn about their rights related to telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. HASA is also connected with the Baltimore Neighbors Network (BNN) to ensure that individuals who are d/Deaf and/or hard of hearing have access to the BNN services, as well as with local arts institutions to ensure that virtual programs are accessible and inclusive. Long-standing relationships with Loyola University and the Community College of Baltimore County continue, with HASA offering opportunities for university students to learn about how to implement tele-services from HASA's licensed and certified professionals.

# Recovery & Forward Strategy

Despite the fact that HASA is still recovering from quickly pivoting to providing virtual services, the leadership remains committed to a strategic future. HASA's CEO/Executive Director, Board of Directors, and Finance and Audit Committees developed a cash management plan to (1) reduce spending except for necessities, (2) develop staffing models to meet the current changing demands, and (3) reimagine a FY21 staffing model to improve efficiency, profit, and sustainability organization-wide.

The External Relations Department submitted grant proposals totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars to support teletherapy, hardware, and software, participated in Giving Tuesday, May 5, 2020, and increased individual fundraising efforts and donor cultivation across all channels of communication. Increasing donor communication and refining the HASA brand and key messaging are priorities moving forward. Implementing a culture of community, awareness, philanthropy, and gratitude are core to the mission and work of HASA as we continue to serve our community.

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## Thank You

*"There is so much work left to be done but because of your partnership and support HASA is able to serve our community during the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing vulnerable populations to understand and be understood. Thank you for ALL you are doing!"*

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## HASA Mission - Vision - Values

**Mission statement** connecting people to their worlds

**Vision statement** a society where everyone can understand and be understood

**Core values** integrity, compassion, equity

**Guiding Principles**, a healthy, impactful, and relevant nonprofit organization

# HASA Leadership

Erin K. Stauder, PhD **CEO/Executive Director**

## **Board of Directors**

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