

The New Year brought many surprises and changes

Our last newsletter set forth a couple of new policies and changes that went into effect with the New Year. To briefly recap those are:

The most important announcement we made was an increase in the range of our pay scales for all positions. This was followed up with many DCS and DPS receiving a rippling wage increase. Employees making in the eight dollars an hour range received a thirty cent increase. Employees making nine dollars received a twenty cent increase. Employees making between ten and below eleven dollars an hour received a ten cent an hour increase. Unfortunately employees making eleven dollars or more an hour, and all administrative staff, had no adjustment. This change ensured that we well exceeded the newest California minimum wage change.

We also clarified that PTO (Paid Time Off) is to be determined by the date of hire with Epiphany Care Homes, Inc. Your original date of hire (if different) may still be utilized for seniority purposes and we will also confirm your original date of hire for any employment related information if needed. Although some PTO accrual corrections were necessary, PTO accrued in 2007 was honored with the original dates of hire accrual rate.

Last year, all permanent employees with more than 90 days employment received birthday bonuses. Unfortunately, the Birthday Bonus program has also been required to be discontinued. As we mentioned in the last newsletter, California law changed the minimum wage again effective January 1st, 2008, and not surprising, we received no rate increase to help offset the wage increase. To adjust for such, we had to sadly discontinue some of our more discretionary programs.

Please contact your QMRP or Human Resources if you have questions.

Insurance Open Enrollment is Here!

It's that that time of year! Open Enrollment for company sponsored benefits (Medical, dental/vision and life insurance) meetings are scheduled this week. With these benefits, a couple of things:

Attendance at a benefits meeting should be considered mandatory for all full-time employees. All employees must attend - regardless if you already have or do not want insurance. Important topics will include changes in coverage and rates changes for 2008. This is the only opportunity of the year to sign up if you are past your initial sign up dates.

It is mandatory that everyone completes the benefits form even if signing to decline.

There is one scheduled meeting per division, and one extra for our day program. Employees may attend whichever meeting is most convenient for them, as long as they attend one. The meeting in Simi Valley will be in Spanish.

We expect changes in the rates so this is your only opportunity to change your plan too.

Open Enrollment Meeting Schedule:

- Monday, Feb 25, 2008 @ 4:00pm at the Corporate Office in Oxnard
- Tuesday, Feb 26, 2008 @ 9:30am at Rural Haven Home in Fillmore
- Wednesday, Feb 27, 2008 @ 10:00am at Moonstone Home in Simi Valley (Provided in Spanish)
- Thursday, Feb 28, 2008 @ 10:00am at the Corporate Office

**How
Sweet it
Was !!**



Pelican and Starfish Homes in Oxnard/Ventura got together in the Corp Office Training Room on Valentine's Day for a Sweetheart Party. The Guys and Gals enjoyed Music, Chocolate, Candy and other Sweet Treats, along with plenty of Silly String and other Fun Games. Most of all, a Great time was had by all!

If your individuals are interested in getting together for a holiday party, or just for the fun of it, call ahead and book the Corporate Training Room for your event.

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WHY IS YOUR ATTENDANCE SO IMPORTANT?

It goes without saying that most of what we do every day, all day, is regulated by the State Department of Public Health. One of the most easily overlooked items is attendance. Our attendance affects not only ourselves, but also our co-workers and our homes. Let's look at it this way:

Our homes' licenses require that we maintain a specific level of staffing based directly on the number of individuals we are serving both in our homes and in our day program. Too few of hours are out of compliance, and too many are out of the reimbursement budget. Accuracy is everything!

Your attendance directly affects not only your pay, but your co-workers' pay as well. Obviously, when you are late or do not come to work, you do not get paid for the lost time. But there's more... when this happens, your co-workers must either stay late, come in early or come in on their time off to cover for you. In many cases, this causes overtime to be paid. We all should know by now that paying so much overtime bites into the company's ability to provide larger pay increases annually to those deserving staff who are working hard every day to serve our individuals.

Your attendance is a reflection of your commitment to your job, and therefore, your clients. For those of you who are committed to what you do, and to your clients, you make sure that you get to work on time, and leave on time, every time, and you make the most of your time while you are being paid. For those of you who make a habit of being late to work, leaving early, or calling off of your scheduled shift, your clients, and co-workers suffer. Ultimately, so do you.

Your attendance also directly affects your evaluations and, therefore, your pay rate. Good attendance equals a higher evaluation rating which equals a higher raise!

As a reminder, company policy requires you to notify your supervisor 4 hours ahead of time if you are going to be late or absent from a scheduled evening or night shift, and two hours ahead for a morning/daytime shift.

It's Winter, and that means it's FLU season! Take plenty of Vitamin C to help stay healthy!!



The Winning Homes in December for:

Lowest overtime

Oxnard/Ventura- Pelican Home
Simi Valley- Coral Home
Fillmore- Winter Haven Home

Best hours control:

Pelican Home

Best budget control:

Jade Home

W-2's were distributed last month. If you have not received yours, please confirm your address on your paycheck and contact your Administrator.

to Epiphany Care!!! We welcome the following team member(s) in joining us in the last month.

WELCOME

Graciela Palanzuelos, Oxnard
Denise Ruiz, Fillmore
Luz Villela, Fillmore
Liliana Deane, Oxnard
Bonnie Alonzo, Oxnard
Ana Cristina Solis, Simi Valley
Maria Lanz, Oxnard

Change of Conditions

Change of Conditions (COC) are any situation that requires a care plan to be initiated or that falls outside normal for the client. It is also any situation that causes a visible injury to the client. When should you write a COC? When there is visible skin injury, abrasion, cuts, bruises, sores, or rash; Broken bones; Abnormal swelling; Temperature over 101° orally, 102° rectally; More than 3 episodes of emesis or diarrhea in a 12 hour period; Seizure activity, Change in level of consciousness; No urination in 6 hours; Shortness of breath, coughing; Vital sign changes that concerns the RN; GT dislodgement; or any condition as identified by the RN as needing medical treatment.

Important information when filling out the COC, remember Who, What, How. Do not put your personal feelings. Use your senses (listen, touch, and smell). Just describe what you see. For scratches, lacerations, bruises, rashes, sores you may use measurements, such as size of a penny, nickel, dime, quarter. You may also use a measuring tape and give exact length or diameter. You may use color, odor, or warm to touch. Document the vitals.

All COCs should be reported to the facility RN and QMRP. You have completed your responsibility once the COC is completed and RN /QMRP is notified.



Did you know?

Helpful Hints for Better Scores in Your Employee Evaluations

Every employee receives an evaluation upon completion of their first 90 days of employment, and then annually based on the month they began employment, or a new position as the result of a promotion that included a pay increase. Evaluations are sent directly to YOU, the employee, in your bi-weekly payroll envelope.

Generally, you have 10 days from the day you receive your evaluation to turn it back in to your OMRP, your day program assistant director, or other supervisor as noted on the evaluation itself. Be on time!! Better yet, turn it in early!! (For direct care/program staff, you get points just for turning the evaluation in on time!)

Be aware of your attendance rating. It carries a lot of weight on your evaluation! Thinking about calling in sick? Leaving early? Stopping for a cup of coffee on the way to work that will only make you "a few" minutes late? Think again! These will cost you points, both on your attendance rating and on your evaluation. You get more points just for coming to work on time, as scheduled.

Be honest. When we ask you to evaluate yourself, it's because we want to know what YOU think of your work habits, your performance and, most importantly, any areas where YOU feel you need help. Let's be real—many simply circle the top score without seriously giving thought to the evaluation. Then you're "surprised" when your supervisor's score is so much different (usually lower) than yours. Take the time to be fair to and honest with yourself and your supervisors. The results may just surprise you!

Let's face it! In our line of work, our employees are subject to many types of bugs and germs. The best way to protect yourself, and our individuals, from exposure to germs, body fluids, etc., is by always practicing **UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS**.

The company provides personal protective equipment for all employees. The use of gloves when performing "hands on" tasks is essential. Disinfectants and wipes should be used as necessary.



Last, but certainly not least, the best, and most simple way, of protecting oneself from exposure is by frequent hand washing.

DAY PROGRAM TIDBITS

Our Day Program Staff and participants have been very busy lately! In the past couple of months, between Christmas and Valentine's, they have spread holiday cheer and shared their talents with many.



They helped to decorate several of our homes for the recent holidays. They made decorations for the homes and gifts for their friends and families. They made holiday wreaths which adorned the front of some of our vans. They spent a lot of time baking and then delivering cookies of all holiday shapes and flavors to deserving people. They recently went on an exploring mission in the mountains of Ojai in search of snow. They have been using the "old" corporate office space as an activity center, where many splendid things are happening. They are certainly GREAT ambassadors of love!

SPRING FORWARD!!!

SUNDAY, MARCH 9, 2008

BRINGS THE FIRST DAY OF DAY-LIGHT SAVINGS TIME.

**DON'T FORGET
TO SET YOUR
CLOCKS
AHEAD
ONE HOUR!!**



RAIN, RAIN GO AWAY!!



We're almost over the hump of Winter and on our way to Spring! As such, the weather is terribly unpredictable at this time of year. Let's take a few minutes to remind ourselves about appropriate clothing for our individuals.

Clothing should be weather appropriate. If it looks like rain, or is cloudy, windy, cool, etc., then please be sure that appropriate outerwear is available for the clients. When leaving for school, day program or outings, they should have moisture resistant jackets and shoes, warm sweaters, and hats, if needed.

In case of warmer weather, it's good to layer clothing, so that adjustments for the weather can be made. An extra change of clothing "just in case" is always a good thing, too.



DID YOU HEAR? HAVE YOU SEEN THEM? We want to make sure that everyone knows that our vans now have personal license plates!

In keeping with the spirit of our Company, and the fact that in the center of all we do is the love we have for our individuals, each vehicle now displays a license plate with EPI (our Company Nick Name), a heart, and the vehicle number itself (0—13).

If you see us on the streets, show some love and wave to us!

Dates to Remember in:

MARCH 2008



Upcoming Events:

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9  ☆	10  ☆	11 ☆	12 ☆	13	14	15
16	17  ☆	18	19	20  ☆	21 ☆	22
23  ☆	24	25	26 ☆	27	28	29
30	31					

- 9th—Daylight Savings Time—Change your clocks forward one hour!!
- 10th—Employee Appreciation Day
- 11th—9:00 am CPR Training / Corp. Office
- 12th—Pay Day
- 17th—St. Patrick's Day
- 20th—First Day of Spring
- 21st—Good Friday
- 23rd—Easter Sunday
- 26th— Pay Day
- March is Women's History Month and National Nutrition Month

Happy Birthday!



Celebrating birthdays in March

Terestia Contreras
 Josefina Martinez
 Kathy Tristan
 Dezaray Martinez

Graciela Palazuelos
 Doreen Juarez
 Elisa Bravo
 Patty Perez

Jackie Colvin
 Maria Lanz
 Sergio Monreal
 Mayra Bravo



Employee Anniversaries

The following team members were inadvertently omitted from last month's newsletter as having celebrated their employment anniversaries with Epiphany Care in January. We apologize for the oversight and Thank You all for your commitment to the homes, and, most importantly, our clients.

Lucy Bernal, FM 14 Years! on 1/3
Josefina Martinez 13 Years! on 1/17
Sergio Monreal 4 Years! on 1/20
Jessie Valle, FM 8 Years! on 1/31
Gaya W., QMRP 4 Years! on 1/31

Celebrating their first anniversary with us:
 (and remember those that refer get paid!!!)

Paulette Donohoe, LVN 1 Year! on 1/23