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Recommendations for social workers during **COVID-19**

There is an immediate risk to social workers' health and lives.

We face concerns about short- and long-term protection of social workers. We hope these recommendations address imperative health needs that must be met.

1

PPE

Provide protective equipment to all client-facing social workers, regardless of the limited nature of in-person services.



2

Increase benefits

Allow pregnant, elder, and otherwise immunosuppressed staff to stay home or work from home with pay and health benefits.

In the immediate short term, social workers can take FMLA if needed. Petition your HR department for increased benefits!

3

Remote practice

Non-medical personnel should be able to work from home and the social workers in healthcare should be carefully examined for opportunities to rotate remote and in-person services to limit exposure for the individual and community.

A lack of teletherapeutic infrastructure is not an appropriate reason to hold social workers to their roles (see public school systems for example).



4

Organizational policy changes

Make clear organizational policies emphasizing that clients stay home and practice social distancing as much as possible. Trust that social workers will utilize their clinical skill set to appropriately assess for their clients' safety and needs.



Organize walk outs, letter writing campaigns or reach out to us for more support in organizing workplace policy changes!

5

No in-person meetings

Hold all organizational meetings online and prohibit in-person meetings.

6

End-of-life care

Healthcare organizations should encourage coordinated care in service of clients and families having preemptive discussions regarding treatment, including designation of healthcare decision makers and completion of advance directives.

