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## **Important COVID-19 Guidance for Behavioral Health Residential Facilities**

The National Council for Behavioral Health (National Council) has received guidance from the Department of Homeland Security. In summary, the Department of Homeland Security's guidance states behavioral health residential facilities should remain committed to taking critical steps to ensure America's health care facilities are prepared to respond to the threat of COVID-19.

The Department of Homeland Security has classified community mental health centers, psychiatric residential facilities, federally qualified health centers and their staff, including those who provide social services and facilitate access to behavioral health services as "Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers." These facilities provide critical services to the community around the clock – services that remain essential during times of crises when individuals may experience increased anxiety and stress, and those with pre-existing mental health and substance use conditions may experience new or worsening symptoms.

For further information regarding this guidance, please go to National Council's [website](#).