Dear NAMI Affiliates, Start-Up Groups, and On Campus initiatives,

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, the federal government, the State of Texas and local jurisdictions have issued emergency orders requiring the temporary closure of nonessential businesses. As a result, many NAMI activities in Texas and throughout the nation have been suspended or shifted to virtual versus in person.

As lockdown orders and other restrictions are being eased, NAMI Texas offers this guidance on resuming operation by affiliates in Texas. Model A Affiliates in Texas are independent 501(c)(3) organizations and may view these guidelines as suggestions which we strongly encourage them to follow. Model B Affiliates and Start-Up Groups are legally an offshoot of the state organization and are expected to follow these directives. NAMI On Campuses operate under Affiliates and must coordinate with their local Affiliate. Model B Affiliates, Start-Up Groups, and NAMI On Campus initiatives may request an exception from the NAMI Texas Executive Director if these guidelines would interfere with desired activities.

Please note: while the resumption of some in-person NAMI activities may be possible under new orders, NAMI Texas strongly advises against it, especially if those in-person NAMI activities can be offered online. COVID-19 is an ongoing public health emergency in which the entire State of Texas is under a disaster declaration. Many are concerned that re-openings are leading to increases in cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. It is in our best interest to operate with an abundance of caution and continue to focus on online programming.

On June 3rd, Governor Abbott ordered GA-26 - relating to the expanded opening of Texas in response to the COVID-19 disaster. GA-26 supersedes GA-23, but various other Executive Orders related to COVID-19 are still in effect. GA-26 is in effect indefinitely, unless it is modified, amended, rescinded, or superseded by the governor.

GA-26 does not contain the following requirements that was in GA-23 and various other Executive Orders:

"In accordance with guidance from DSHS Commissioner Dr. Hellerstedt, and to achieve the goals established by the President to reduce the spread of COVID-19, every person in Texas shall, except where necessary to provide or obtain Covered Services, minimize social gatherings and minimize in-person contact with people who are not in the same household. People over the age of 65, however, are strongly encouraged to stay at home as much as possible; to maintain appropriate distance from any member of the household who has been out of the residence in the previous 14 days; and, if leaving
the home, to implement social distancing and to practice good hygiene, environmental cleanliness, and sanitation."

The requirement quoted above has been the primary basis for NAMI Texas' declaration that no in-person NAMI events/gatherings/programs of any size should be taking place in Texas for the time being. **With that removal of that requirement, it is possible that certain less-than-10-person in-person NAMI activities can resume.** However, there are still requirements in GA-26 that must be carefully followed if less-than-10-person in-person NAMI activities will resume. Furthermore, the safety and health of all involved - including the volunteers, staff, participants, cleaning personnel, and others - must be the absolute highest priority at all times.

GA-26 says, "**Except as provided in this executive order or in the minimum standard health protocols recommended by DSHS, found at www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus, people should not be in groups larger than ten and should maintain six feet of social distancing from those not in their group. People over the age of 65 are strongly encouraged to stay at home as much as possible; to maintain appropriate distance from any member of the household who has been out of the residence in the previous 14 days; and, if leaving the home, to implement social distancing and to practice good hygiene, environmental cleanliness, and sanitation.**"

In-person NAMI activities are **not** among the re-opened businesses in any of the Governor's orders. However, GA-26 opens up the opportunity for people to gather in groups of 10-or-less, under strict health guidelines.

Please be advised – many parts of Texas are still under some form of city and/or county stay-at-home order. It is critical that you consult local guidance from city and county officials to determine if and how to resume in-NAMI activities. For NAMI On Campus initiatives, your campus guidelines will supersede your local NAMI Affiliate's guidelines, if they are more restrictive than the Affiliate's. **If you are under any form of local stay-at-home order, we strongly caution against in-person NAMI activities for Model A Affiliates and we prohibit it for Model B Affiliates and start-up groups. If your community has experienced any recent upticks in COVID-19 transmissions, hospitalizations, or deaths, we strongly advise that you hold off on resuming in-person NAMI activities of any size.**

If you have the intention of resuming in-person NAMI activities, we ask that you fill out the form below, sign at the bottom, and return it to NAMI Texas. [Model A Affiliates: you are not required to fill out the form, but we encourage it and would be happy to keep it on file for you].
Sincerely,

Greg Hansch
Executive Director, NAMI Texas
COVID-19 Re-Opening: In-Person NAMI Activities Attestation Form

Your Name: ____________

Your Organization: ____________

Your Email Address: ____________

Your Phone Number: ________________

Please answer the following questions:

Are you in a community no longer requiring significant mitigation?

(Y or N) ____________

Will resuming in-person NAMI activities be in compliance with state, county, and city orders?

(Y or N) ____________

How will you guarantee that in-person NAMI activities will have no more than 10 people attending?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Will you prohibit attendance by those who have had close contact to a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 until they have completed a 14 day self-quarantine period from the last date of exposure?

(Y or N) ____________
Will you train all involved persons on appropriate cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette?

(Y or N) __________

Before and after in-person NAMI activities, will you or others clean and disinfect surfaces, door handles, and other places often touched?

(Y or N) __________

Will you require attendees to wash or sanitize their hands upon entering the business?

(Y or N) __________

Will you require attendees to wash or sanitize their hands upon leaving the business?

(Y or N) __________

Will you require attendees to self-screen for the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19:
- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit;
- Sore throat;
- Cough;
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing;
- Chills;
- Repeated shaking with chills;
- Muscle pain;
- Headache;
- Loss of taste or smell;
- Diarrhea;
- Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19.

(Y or N) __________

Will you send home any attendee exhibiting new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19 (those listed in the previous question)?

(Y or N) __________

Will you send home all attendees that are coughing or otherwise feeling ill?

(Y or N) __________

Will you require attendees to wear a mask, unless they have a medical reason to not
wear a mask?
(Y or N)___________

Will you have masks available for attendees who do not bring their own?
(Y or N)___________

Will you research (and, if feasible, implement) temperature checks for attendees?
(Y or N)___________

Will you provide at least 6 feet of spacing between all participants?
(Y or N)___________

Will you be offering food at the activity?
(Y or N)___________

If you offer food, will the food be individually packed for each individual?
(Y or N)___________

Will you offer bottled water at the activity or ask that people bring their own bottled water?
(Y or N)___________

Will you only allow those who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 to attend the activity if a.) at least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications), b.) the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), and c.) at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared?
(Y or N)___________

If an attendee has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, will you require the attendee to either complete the three-step criteria listed above or obtain a medical professional’s note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis before they attend an activity?
(Y or N)___________
Please sign here: _________________________________

Before resuming any in-person NAMI activities, please return this form to executive.director@namitexas.org or P.O Box 300817, Austin, TX 78703. If you are a Model B Affiliate, Start-Up Group, or NAMI On Campus, please wait for a response from NAMI Texas before resuming in-person NAMI activities. [Model A Affiliates: you are not required to fill out the form, but we encourage it and would be happy to keep it on file for you].