

Getting back to 'normal'

By Superintendent Stephen L. Williams
BHN Alliance

How many of us thought we would be where we are just one year ago? On March 9, 2020, after weeks of fear and uncertainty about an unknown virus known as COVID-19, Governor DeWine declared a state of emergency. A week later, we closed all the County Board offices to the public. We suspended home visits and cancelled in-person ISP meetings. We began working from home, connecting with people we support virtually or by phone. Weeks of this became months and from behind our masks, as the virus surged, we wondered when we would get back to normal.

One year later "normal" looks different. Normal is wearing a mask. Normal is eating in instead of dining out. Normal is a Zoom meeting and a virtual birthday party. Of course, none of this is really normal, it's become routine and necessary to keep one another healthy and safe. We still long for normal in our lives.

There is good news. Diagnoses of COVID-19 are declining and vaccinations are being administered to thousands of people, including the people we support and direct support professionals. The Governor continues to lift restrictions, and that means we can, too.

Starting April 1, 2021, staff will return to the County Board offices. Masks and social distancing will be required and protective measures continued as we re-open our board resources to just a few people at a time. Some restrictions remain, and we ask for your patience and understanding. We want to do this the right way for everyone.

I want to thank the entire BHN Alliance team for all they've done during the past year. They truly embrace our purpose and are committed to the people we support and each other. We're on our way back to normal, and I am looking forward to seeing their smiling eyes.
