
Date: **March 15, 2020**

Memo to: **Purchase of Service (POS) Agenciesⁱ**

From: **Marc D. Smith, Acting Director, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services**

Subject: **Guidance for Purchase of Service (POS) Agencies - Coronavirus Disease 2019**

COVID-19 Background Information

The Illinois Department of Public Health, local health departments, and public health partners throughout Illinois, and federal agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), are responding to an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus called COVID-19.

The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported January 21, 2020 and the first confirmed case in Illinois was announced January 24, 2020 (a Chicago resident). The first cases outside Chicago and Cook County were reported March 11, 2020 in Kane and McHenry counties. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on the CDC webpage at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html. Illinois case totals and test results are listed below.

Human coronaviruses are a group of viruses that commonly cause either mild-to-moderate illness – such as a cold with runny nose, headache, cough, sore throat, or fever or sometimes pneumonia. It is like other respiratory viruses with regard to transmission. In general, these viruses are spread when a sick person coughs or sneezes. It is also possible to become sick by touching surfaces contaminated with a virus, and then touching one's own eyes, nose, or mouth. Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or an upper sleeve and washing hands with soap and water or with an alcohol-based hand rub are essential in stopping the spread of respiratory viruses.

Person-to-person spread of COVID-19 appears to be mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Preliminary data suggest older adults and people with underlying health conditions or compromised immune systems seems to be at greater risk of developing serious illness from the virus.

If you are sick and have respiratory symptoms, such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath, stay home unless you need medical attention. Refer to the CDC risk assessment tool at, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html> Remain in your home until you feel better and have no symptoms. Those who need medical attention should contact their health care provider who will evaluate whether they can be cared for at home or need to be hospitalized.

This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as needed here and on the CDC website at cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html.

Facilities concerned that a service recipient, visitor, or employee may have COVID-19 should contact their local public health department or contact the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) COVID-19 hotline at **1-800-889-3931** and notify the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS) immediately.

Develop Your Plan

The goal of this document is to provide guidance in prevention, management and the development of plans in the event of an occurrence. Agencies should devise strategies to prevent the introduction of COVID-19 and manage known or potential exposures to COVID-19 and assist in preventing widespread transmission. Agencies should be prepared in the event of widespread community transmission.

Special considerations should be taken to prevent disease transmission when considering the movement of youth or residents, visitors and staff into and within the programs, foster homes and facilities. Providers are advised to contact and collaborate with DCFS and other local, state, and federal partners to develop specific protocols and procedures that would be employed to control impacts from COVID-19.

Anticipatory Planning for COVID-19 in Illinois

IDCFS has requested that agencies develop plans to address the recognition and management of individual COVID-19 cases while there is limited evidence of community COVID-19 transmission, as well as preparing for the possibility of widespread community transmission.

Develop your plans based on of the identification of LIMITED transmission of COVID-19 in Illinois:

- Prevent the introduction of COVID-19 and other respiratory pathogens INTO your agency
- Rapidly identify persons with respiratory illness
- Prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory pathogens WITHIN and BETWEEN your programs
- Manage and isolate persons with suspected or confirmed COVID-19
- Be familiar with infection control guidance
- Consider planning and needs to accommodate persons with possible COVID-19 exposure

Also consider readiness and response plans in the event of WIDESPREAD transmission in Illinois of COVID-19 and implement detailed guidance around:

- SOCIAL DISTANCING - to limit further spread of COVID-19 disease
- ISOLATION - What should someone do if they have a flu like illness or have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- CAREGIVER GUIDANCE - How to provide care for a person who is sick with a flu like illness or has been diagnosed with COVID-19

Be prepared

Form a planning committee that includes representatives of all internal partners and that is authorized by agency leadership to finalize a COVID-19 response plan promptly and in coordination with city, state, and federal partners.

- Refer to the CDC and IDPH sites for preparedness resources
- Identify and implement mechanisms for access to public health and other critical information needed for situational awareness, including CDC and IDPH websites.
- Consult and collaborate with other providers as needed
- Communicate with staff and persons served - Keep families and employees informed.
 - ✓ Describe what actions the agency is taking to protect them, including answering their questions and explaining what they can do to protect themselves and others.
 - ✓ Educational materials and information should be provided to persons served and visitors in a way that can be understood by non-English speakers. When evaluating and treating persons who may have COVID-19, provide an interpreter if possible. Visit the [IDPH website](#) for multilingual materials and resources.
- Protect your workforce and persons served
 - ✓ Ensure staff are aware of sick leave policies and are encouraged to stay home if they are ill with respiratory symptoms.
 - ✓ Advise employees to check for any signs of illness before reporting to work each day and notify their supervisor if they become ill.
 - ✓ Do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with respiratory symptoms.

Suggested Plan Elements

1. Planning for Limited Transmission of COVID-19 in Illinois

While there is evidence of limited transmission of COVID-19 disease in Illinois, agencies should focus on rapidly identifying potential cases. Upon recognition of widespread transmission, agencies should focus on shifting toward their Agency Action Plans or pandemic plans (see section 4. Facility Readiness and Response to Widespread Community Transmission of COVID-19).

A. Prevent the Introduction of Respiratory Pathogens INTO the Program or Site

- Signage
 - ✓ Post signs at the entrance instructing visitors not to visit if they have symptoms of respiratory infection.
 - ✓ Ensure staff and persons served are familiar with the symptoms of general acute respiratory infection, as well as criteria for COVID-19 which includes fever, cough or shortness of breath.
- Screen visitors in advance and upon arrival for fever or signs of an acute respiratory illness
 - ✓ Inform potential visitors that symptomatic persons will not be allowed to enter the building. When possible, agencies should inform potential visitors of these rules before they travel to the site.
 - ✓ Ask persons upon arrival for symptoms or possible exposures to COVID-19 (see Appendix 4 for IDPH screening tool). Exclude visitors who appear to be ill or report fever, cough, shortness of breath and either travel from an [affected geographic area](#) within the past 14 days OR close contact with a person with confirmed COVID-19 within the past 14 days.
- Employees and volunteers

- ✓ Ensure sick leave policies allow employees to stay home if they have symptoms of respiratory infection.
- ✓ Inform staff to stay home if they feel ill and remain at home until their symptoms resolve.

B. Rapid Detection of Cases of Persons with Acute Respiratory Illness

- Instruct staff and persons served to report recent symptoms of fever, cough or shortness of breath to the appropriate personnel at the first signs of illness.
- Screen new persons at intake for recent respiratory illness.
- Advise caregivers to consider daily temperature and symptom checks of family members and monitor for new fever and/or respiratory illness.
- Any persons with respiratory illness and who meet potential COVID-19 criteria should contact a medical provider or facility to determine if they require medical care. If the sick person is a youth, contact their medical provider and inform the provider that the youth has a respiratory illness.
- Review and monitor the IDPH and local community health department websites to be aware of COVID-19 activity in Illinois to help inform your evaluation of individuals with unknown respiratory illness. If there is transmission of COVID-19 in the community, in addition to implementing the precautions described below, facilities should also consult with IDPH for additional guidance.

C. Prevent the Spread of Respiratory Pathogens WITHIN and BETWEEN Programs and Sites

- If a staff member or youth has a respiratory illness, contact a medical provider or facility to determine if the person requires medical care. Inform the provider of the respiratory illness. If the sick person must leave an isolated area for medically necessary procedures, have them wear a facemask (if tolerated).
- Support hand and respiratory hygiene, as well as cough etiquette by persons served, visitors, and employees.
 - ✓ Ensure employees clean their hands according to CDC guidelines, including before and after contact with others, after contact with contaminated surfaces or equipment, and after removing personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - ✓ Ensure alcohol-based hand rub is accessible to staff, persons served and visitors, at reception areas, in meeting rooms and in restrooms at minimum.
 - ✓ Make sure tissues are available and any sink is well-stocked with soap and paper towels for hand washing.
- Notify other facilities prior to transferring a youth with an acute respiratory illness, including suspected or confirmed COVID-19, to another facility or higher level of care.

D. Management and Isolation of Suspected or Confirmed Cases

- If COVID-19 infection is suspected or has been confirmed in someone in your building, restrict that person to a room or somewhere they can be isolated from others by at least six feet until you determine next steps. Contact a medical provider to determine if the person needs medical attention. You may also contact IDPH at **1-800-889-3931** or email dph.sick@illinois.gov.

- Limit transport of suspected COVID-19 patients to essential purposes only. Place facemasks on persons suspected to have COVID-19 during transport.
- Doors to any room or area housing suspected and confirmed COVID-19 patients should be kept closed except for entry or exit.
- Ensure staff know where and how to report persons with respiratory illness and manage them until further action can occur (e.g., place in separate room with door closed).
- Ensure access to hand washing stations and or alcohol-based sanitizers and facemasks for ill persons to wear to prevent further spread.
- Treatment recommendations for COVID-19 are still evolving. More information is available on the IDPH website.

2. Agency Readiness and Response to Widespread Community Transmission of COVID-19

Agencies should consider adopting measures to reduce community transmission. If a crisis management plan or system exists for the agency or program, follow that protocol. If your agency has an existing emergency management response plan, leverage that system and structure at this point. Use the system to address the following components for organization readiness and response.

If no such structure already exists, designate a team of staff members to assist in developing and implementing a site-specific plan to prevent widespread transmission of COVID-19 and to avoid major disruptions in services. The COVID-19 team should be made up of staff who are familiar with measures taken to limit exposure to and spread of influenza and other winter respiratory viruses. Ensure appropriate operational, healthcare and administrative representatives are involved to manage the incident.

Assign staff members to address the following activities along with any others that may be required by oversight agencies:

a) Assessing Risk to Employees and Measures to Maintain Their Health

b) Education and Training for Employees

c) Facility Readiness: Signage, Supplies, and Staffing

d) Housekeeping

Plan for each of these activities by assessing needs, deciding how your agency will implement the activities and what resources are needed for handling children and families, employees, or visitors who present with symptoms suspicious for COVID-19. General guidance is available in CDC's [Implementation of Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission](#).

a) Assessing Risk to Employees and Measures to Maintain Their Health

- Assess the potential exposure risks to COVID-19 for all agency employees. Consider those who provide home visiting, therapy sessions, child protective services, sanitation or services that require prolonged close contact.
- Provide employees with information about preventing the spread of respiratory illnesses.
- Review the agency's sick-leave policy and encourage staff to stay home while ill.

b) Education and Training

- Educate staff about how respiratory illness spreads to inform and improve adoption of best practices to prevent the spread of respiratory illness.
- Hold educational sessions for staff to review information on agency policies for respiratory illnesses.
- Educational sessions should include information on COVID-19 symptoms, how respiratory illnesses spread, basic cough and sneeze etiquette, hand washing, personal protective equipment, and housekeeping procedures.
- All staff, including administrators, field staff, therapists, and custodians should attend training sessions.
- Information can also be provided through signs, written materials and video presentations.
- As more is learned about the current COVID-19 outbreak, regular announcements should be made to keep all informed, especially regarding changes in prevention measures and medical treatment protocols.

c) Facility Readiness: Signage, Supplies, and Staffing

- Prominently display posters, such as “Cover Your Cough” signs, at all entrances, bathrooms, and common areas. Handwashing posters in multiple languages are available from the [CDC website](#).
- Display signs instructing staff and visitors to notify your identify agency personnel if they have fever and cough or shortness of breath.
- Consider showing a streaming video in common areas that have a television that demonstrates proper methods for hand-washing and respiratory etiquette.
- Make the means for appropriate hand cleansing readily available within your agency, including intake areas, visitor entries and exits, visitation rooms, common areas, and staff-restricted areas, in addition to lavatories. The means for hand cleansing is ideally running water, soap, hand drying machines or paper towels and waste baskets; alternatively, except in lavatories and food preparation areas, alcohol-based hand sanitizers may be used.
- Maintain sufficient supplies of hand soap and paper towels, hand sanitizers, tissues, general cleaners, and disinfectants; personal protective equipment if necessary.
- Use of a face mask is sometimes medically indicated for persons with a respiratory illness as it can prevent a sick person from spreading their illness to others. IDPH and the CDC do not currently recommend the use of face masks among the general population.

d) Housekeeping

- Clean your agency routinely and effectively.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, door handles, elevator buttons, handrails and telephones, as well as non-porous surfaces in bathrooms, cafeterias and offices (e.g., floors), using a disinfectant that is active against viral pathogens.
- Place waste baskets in visible locations and empty regularly.
- Ensure that waiting areas and other open common areas have adequate ventilation (e.g., open windows if practical).

3. Review Health and Mental Health Response

Some agencies provide health care and/or mental health services ranging from full service on-site health care to evaluation with referral to off-site providers. Have plans in place plans for youth who regularly receive health

services. If a youth is required to be isolated, consider alternative arrangements such as tele-communications for the youth to receive their regular services.

- Identify what health care and/or mental health resources are available and review and update where appropriate provider contracts, emergency medical protocols including transporting persons to a healthcare facility, notification of receiving facilities, and contact information for providers and pharmacies.
- Staff providing health care services should be familiar with:
 - ✓ IDPH Clinical Guidance:
<http://dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/Clinical%20guidance%203.11.20.pdf>
 - ✓ CDC provider guidance materials:
 - Infection control guidance for health care facilities developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - Steps healthcare facilities can take to prepare: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/steps-to-prepare.html>
 - Interim guidance for LTC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/prevent-spread-in-long-term-care-facilities.html>
 - Interim guidance for healthcare facilities: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/guidance-hcf.html>

4. Continuity of Operations

- Anticipate and plan for staffing challenges
 - ✓ Expect that many employees could become ill and furloughed until no longer a risk to others.
 - ✓ Telecommuting may be an option for some.
- Anticipate and plan for shortages as supply chains are affected; pre-order essentials to maintain adequate reserves.
- Partners during routine operations – law enforcement, the courts, state agencies – will be affected similarly. Your agency operations should be capable of adjusting to challenges felt in other related systems.

Your assigned IDCFS licensing and monitoring staff will be available to respond to questions or provide clarifications as needed.

Additional Details and Examples

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social Distancing to Limit further Spread of COVID-19 Disease

Limiting the number of people who congregate and interact with one another within a site and allowing more physical space between people can help to curb spread of this infection. Depending on specific program needs and severity of exposure to persons with COVID-19, social distancing can range from decreasing the number of people who can congregate at a time for different activities to suspending all non-essential activities. Explain to youth and staff why people are isolated from others to avoid stigmatizing those who are affected.

The following are examples of social distancing that can be considered in congregate settings to limit the spread of an infectious respiratory illness:

Sleeping Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase spacing so beds are at least 3-6 feet apart • If space allows, put less residents within a dorm/unit • Arrange beds so that individuals lay head-to-toe (or toe-to-toe), or use neutral barriers (foot lockers, curtains) to create barriers between beds • Move persons with symptoms into separate rooms with closed doors, and provide separate bathroom if possible • If only shared rooms are available, consider housing the ill person in a room with the fewest possible number of other residents • Avoid housing people with underlying conditions in same room as people with symptoms
Mealtimes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stagger mealtimes to reduce crowding in shared eating facilities • Stagger the schedule for use of common/shared kitchens
Bathrooms & Bathing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a staggered bathing schedule to reduce the amount of people using the facilities at the same time
Recreation/Common Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a schedule for using common spaces • Reduce activities that congregate many people at once such as “house meetings” and opt for smaller group activities
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose to transporting less people per trip and ensure that passengers have more space between one another
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of face-to-face interactions for simple informational purposes • Consider using the following methods of communication: Bulletin boards, signs, posters, brochures, emails, phone, sliding information under someone’s door or mailbox
Staff Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce unnecessary assembly of staff (e.g., large meetings where information can be communicated otherwise) • Where appropriate, opt for conference calls instead of in-person meetings

ROOM ISOLATION

What should someone do if they have a flu like illness or have been diagnosed with COVID-19?

If you are sick with a flu like illness, the steps below can help you from getting others sick.

Stay in your room or designated area except to get medical care – While you are sick, restrict activities outside your room or designated area, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas, and do not use public transportation (e.g., bus or subway). You should ideally only travel in a private car and wear a facemask while outside of the home. If you do not have anyone to drive you in a private car, then use a taxi or car service, wear a facemask and sit in the back seat.

Separate yourself from other people – As much as possible, you should stay in a different room from other people. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available.

Wear a facemask – Wear a facemask when you are in the same room with other people and when you visit a healthcare provider. If you cannot wear a facemask, the people who live with you should wear one while they are in the same room with you.

Cover your coughs and sneezes – Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or you can cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can, and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Wash your hands – Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available and if your hands are not visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid sharing common items – Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items with other people. After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water.

Monitor your symptoms – Notify someone in the facility or call your doctor if your illness is worsening (e.g., high fevers, difficulty breathing).

Call ahead before visiting your doctor – Before your medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you are sick. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected. Do not use public transportation, instead use a taxi, car service or privately-owned car and wear a facemask while outside of the facility

CAREGIVER GUIDANCE

How to provide care for a person who is sick with a flu-like illness or has been diagnosed with COVID-19:

Help with basic needs – Make sure you can help the person adhere to instructions for medication and care, and provide support for getting groceries, prescriptions, and other personal needs.

Limit the person to one room – Only people who are providing care for the person should enter the room or designated area.

- Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Restrict visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the room.
- Keep elderly people and those who have compromised immune systems or chronic health conditions away from the person. This includes people with chronic heart, lung or kidney conditions, and diabetes.

Wash your hands – often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available and if your hands are not visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid sharing common items – You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items. After the person uses these items, you should wash them thoroughly.

Clean all “high-touch” surfaces – such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day.

Wash laundry thoroughly

Monitor the person’s symptoms – If they are getting sicker, notify someone at the facility or call his or her healthcare provider to make arrangements to have them seen. Make sure the provider is aware the person has or may have 2019-nCoV, this will help the healthcare provider’s office take steps to keep other people from getting infected.

Monitor yourself – caregivers and others in close contact with the person should monitor their own health for signs or symptoms of a flu like illness.

SAMPLE VISITOR SCREENING TOOL

Visitor Screening Questionnaire

In an effort to protect everyone from illness, (AGENCY NAME) is taking measures to prevent the spread of exposure COVID-19 in this facility.

Please review the following questions.

	Yes	No
I have been in contact with a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case with fever and lower respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)		
I have recently traveled to a country where COVID-19 (coronavirus) is spreading within the past 14 days (CDC Levels 2 and 3 travel warnings) with fever and lower respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)		
I have been in close contact with people who have traveled to countries where COVID-19 (coronavirus) is spreading within the past 14 days		
I have had unusual respiratory symptoms		
I am higher risk for complications		
I have been around people who are sick with colds or flu		
I have symptoms of a cold		
I have a fever, or have had a fever within the past week		
I have been nauseated or have vomited or had diarrhea within the past week.		

If your answer is yes to any question, please postpone your visit for at least 14 days after the start of your symptoms. Contact your health care provider if your symptoms get worse.

Note: Employees and healthcare personnel are not visitors.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

NOTE: Please be aware that this guidance is based on the best information currently available and will be updated as more is learned about the COVID-19 outbreak. IDPH may change its recommendations as the situation evolves. IDPH will announce if additional measures are needed. Visit the IDPH website (<http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>) for more information.

For general questions about COVID-19 and Illinois' response and guidance, call 1-800-889-3931 or email DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV.

ⁱ This document was adapted from *Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Congregate Settings*, NYC Department of Health, March 3, 2020

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