

Date: March 12, 2020

Memo to: Child Care Institutions, Group Homes and Child Welfare Agencies

From: George Vennikandam, Deputy Director, Division of Licensing

Subject: **Agency Action Plan: COVID-19**

Human cases of COVID-19 have been identified internationally and in the United States. The number of cases is increasing daily. COVID-19 causes a range of symptoms from asymptomatic illness to severe respiratory disease. The virus is highly contagious and infection control measures are necessary to decrease the spread of the illness and to protect those at greatest risk.

As a result, even though you are not a DCFS contracted agency, the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services (IDCFS) as your licensing entity is strongly recommending that you develop a COVID-19 Agency Action Plan that will outline the following at a minimum, but not limited to:

- 1) Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to ensure delivery of essential services to the youth and families that you serve:
 - a. Determine what effect COVID-19 may have on your agency's operation.
 - b. Determine what effect COVID-19 may have on your ability to continue public outreach and access services.
 - c. Determine what effect COVID-19 may have on services coming into your facility.
 - d. Determine the need to anticipate and approve flexible work schedules for employee absences for personal illness, family illness, community containment measures (isolation and quarantine) and school/public or community closures (how you will maintain staff ratios, etc.).
 - e. Determine the need to implement policy and procedures for working with, and providing services to, special needs populations.
 - f. Develop other contingency plans, such as moving children to other locations if necessary.
- 2) Identification of COVID-19 Infection Control Measures
 - a. Outline preventative steps to limit the frequency, type, and face-to-face contact (hand-shaking, attendance at meetings and conferences, sharing of workspaces, etc.) between employees and the public.

- b. Procure Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and infection control supplies for youth, staff, and visitors to your agency, per Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations.
- c. Develop policies outlining mandatory leave for employees with COVID-19 exposure, symptom of illness or confirmed infection. This should include quarantine for 14 days post-exposure or isolation, if symptomatic, for 14 days post-exposure. Please note that quarantine requirements may change over time; please monitor CDC and IDPH guidance for updates. IDCFS will continue to provide updates as well.
- d. Develop and distribute an employee awareness campaign that provides information on COVID-19 and protective measures. Create a communication strategy to describe actions being taken and keep employees informed.
- e. Inform potential visitors that symptomatic persons will not be allowed to enter the facility. Routine communication channels should be utilized. Ask persons upon arrival at the facility for symptoms or possible exposure to COVID-19. 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.
- f. Evaluate existing janitorial services and cleaning operations against current CDC cleaning guidance (see Attachment A).

3) Identification of youth and staff who exhibit signs of coronavirus and/or similar symptoms:

- a. Total Number of Employees and Youth in care at the site
- b. Number of Persons absent because of illness or quarantine.
- c. Number of Persons absent with confirmed COVID-19.

Ultimately, our mutual interest is the protection of the youth and families that you serve, and your agency staff.

Your contract or funding agency may have other instructions or specific expectations. Our recommendation is not intended to conflict with any such requests and instructions and their instructions supersede our advisory.

Thank you,

Cc. Darryl Johnson, Associate Deputy Director, Agencies & Institutions Licensing

Attachment A: Resource Links

[IDPH COVID-19 Website](#)

[IDPH Clinical Guidance](#)

[CDC Print Resources](#)

[CDC Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Schools and Childcare Programs](#)

[CDC COVID-19 and Long-Term Care Facilities](#)

[CDC FAQ on COVID-19](#)