

Date: April 7, 2020  
Memo to: DCFS and POS Placement Staff, Residential and Group Home Providers, Court Personnel  
From: Janet Ahern, DCFS Guardianship Administrator  
Subject: **DCFS Notification of Youth in Care Exposed/Symptomatic/Confirmed to have COVID-19**

To notify the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) when a youth in the custody or legal guardianship of DCFS has been exposed to, is symptomatic, is awaiting test results or has tested positive for COVID-19, call the **DCFS Guardian's Office Consent Hotline at 1-800-828-2179**. A youth is considered **exposed** when they have had close contact\*\* (six feet) for a prolonged period of time\*\*\* with someone who has COVID-19. A youth is considered **symptomatic** when they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, which include, but are not limited to fever, cough, and shortness of breath. A youth is **confirmed** to have COVID-19 after a positive test administered by a health care provider.

The DCFS Guardian's Office Consent Hotline **operates Monday through Friday from 8:30a.m. until 5:00p.m.** A designee from the DCFS Guardian's Office will screen calls and complete the **DCFS Guardian's Office COVID-19 Youth Data Collection Form**. If you leave a voicemail, a designee from the DCFS Guardian's Office Consent Hotline will call you back to collect more information.

The DCFS Guardian's Office designee will request:

- Youth identification and placement information;
- A description of known youth and household member health conditions;
- Known placement concerns.

The DCFS Guardian's Office designee will email the completed form to [DCFS.CLINICALCOVID19@illinois.gov](mailto:DCFS.CLINICALCOVID19@illinois.gov). A designee from the DCFS Nursing team will review submitted forms, triage the circumstances of the call, and contact callers as needed.

**NOTE: The DCFS Guardian's Office Consent Hotline will not provide emergency assistance for health issues or placement disruption. In case of an emergency medical issue, a health care provider should be contacted. In case of an immediate placement disruption, notify the youth's caseworker.**

*\*\* Data are limited to define close contact. Factors to consider when defining close contact include proximity, the duration of exposure (e.g., longer exposure time likely increases exposure risk), whether the individual has symptoms (e.g., coughing likely increases exposure risk) and whether the individual was wearing a facemask (which can efficiently block respiratory secretions from contaminating others and the environment).*

*\*\*\*Data are insufficient to precisely define the duration of time that constitutes a prolonged exposure. Recommendations vary on the length of time of exposure from 10 minutes or more to 30 minutes or more. In healthcare settings, it is reasonable to define a prolonged exposure as any exposure greater than a few minutes because the contact is someone who is ill. Brief interactions are less likely to result in transmission; however, symptoms and the type of interaction (e.g., did the person cough directly into the face of the individual) remain important.*