



COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting
April 10, 2020



General Information

Beginning on Monday, 4-13-2020, these provider meetings will be held only on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

- We will call special meetings if the need arises.

As of the time of this meeting (4-10-2020 at 4:30 pm) there are 788 confirmed cases and 18 deaths in the County.

- The Health Department released a [new dashboard](#) that provides more detail and new information such as the number of tests administered.

Elizabeth Miller, M.D. Ph.D. and Kristin Ray, M.D. joined to talk about the Family Strengths Survey led by the Pittsburgh Study. This survey is tracking how families are doing so that we can tailor our responses.

- Week 1 Results (April 3-9)
 - 1,399 participants.
 - Families are struggling most with socially, mentally and emotionally supporting their children and keeping them well connected with friends, family, religious communities and neighbors.
 - Parents are struggling with feeling well-adjusted socially, mentally and emotionally; adjusting to changes in work, employment or income; and protecting themselves and their families from COVID-19.
 - Over 40% of respondents lost a job or had decreased income due to the pandemic.
- Please share the survey with families.
 - [Click here to take the Family Strengths Survey.](#)
 - A Spanish version of the survey can be found at [Haz clic aquí para tomar la Encuesta Fuerzas de la Familia.](#)
 - A phone version of the survey can be accessed by phone at (412) 692-8026.

Circles Pittsburgh also conducted a needs survey.

- 521 families participated (1,986 people).
- Identified needs: food and computers for children's schoolwork were the most requested items, followed by rental assistance and toilet paper.
- Employment and housing findings: At least 49% had experienced a change in employment due to COVID-19. Of those who experienced a job loss (32% of respondents), 61% have children.

DHS Key Indicator Data

- Key Indicators can now be found on a dashboard on [Allegheny County Analytics](#).
- March 8th through present represents comparison to period of time prior.

The following indicators have changed significantly since the pre-COVID comparison period (March 1-8):

- Calls to the Link have decreased 22%.
- Calls to child welfare have decreased 44%, but we are seeing a slight up-tick in recent days.
- Calls to the Elder Abuse Hotline have decreased by 55%.
- Reports of Need for older adults have decreased by 44%.

- Calls to Director’s Action Line (DHS complaint line) have decreased 22%.
- Number of bookings into the jail have decreased 53%.
- Average number of people held in the jail have decreased 18%.
- Number of new cases filed have decreased 75%.

The following indicators have remained relatively stable since the pre-COVID comparison period (March 1-8):

- Number of people in emergency shelters
- Number of children in placement – however, we have seen declines in recent days, with record low numbers of children (88) in congregate care
- Calls to SeniorLine – but calls are increasing in complexity
- Mental health crises

2-1-1 Call Data

- This past week (week of 4-6) saw the highest 2-1-1 call volume since 2-1-2020.¹
- Calls for financial assistance are continuing to increase.
- Volume of calls for food increased, surpassing COVID-specific calls.

New DHS Guidance for all housing/residential providers:

We have created a toolkit for residential providers with infection prevention and control guidance. It will be posted on our site soon.

- We worked closely with the Health Department and the toolkit draws on guidance provided by the CDC, PA Department of Health, Allegheny County Health Department and NY State Office of Mental Health.
- Highlighted guidance includes:
 - Admissions
 - Programs should continue accepting new client referrals and admitting new clients.
 - All clients should be screened for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure.
 - Given the limitations in testing, programs cannot reasonably require a COVID-19 test as a condition of admission.
 - Clients should not be refused admission solely based on their COVID-19 status or health conditions that place them at greater risk of COVID-19.
 - Programs are expected to isolate clients who are symptomatic and/or have tested positive for COVID-19 onsite whenever possible and immediately contact the Health Department.
 - **Behavioral health and intellectual disability residential providers**, please work closely with your DHS office (Office of Behavioral Health or Office of Intellectual Disabilities) when pursuing any referrals to an offsite isolation and quarantine facility. We will arrange a quick case conference with you.
 - Screening
 - Determine if the client has a fever.
 - Ask the client “Do you have a new or worsening cough today?”
 - Ask if the client has been exposed.

- If yes, follow the procedure in the guidance document and use standard protocols for medical emergencies.
- Intake and isolation: Use the flow chart and guidance provided in the toolkit.

We are continuing to improve our website, located at www.bit.ly/COVID19DHSProviders.

- The [Operational Changes Tracker](#) is now live.
- We have reorganized the site, moving all program-specific information to a menu bar at the top of the page.
- You can reach us by email at DHS-COVID19planning@alleghenycounty.us. We will answer all questions and elevate issues to inform the network.

Legislative/Policy Updates

Federal updates

Possible Fourth Wave stimulus update:

- Senate adjourned until Monday without a deal. Republicans want funding for businesses only but Democrats want to add funding for hospitals and local governments.

State and local updates

- The PA Department of Health released a [Hospital Preparedness Dashboard](#) showing the number of available beds and ventilators county by county.
- PA hospitals are asking Governor Wolf for more state funding after the \$50 million earmarked last week was exhausted.
 - 85% of hospitals in the state expect to run out of the highly protective N95 masks in the next four to seven days; 41% expect to run out within three days.

Food

Many food distributions occurred across the county today. See slide presentation for pictures.

The food bank is further exploring home delivery. We hope to have more updates on that next week.

Provider food access calls are held on Tuesdays at 3:30 pm. See slide presentation for call-in information.

AAA food information

- No new updates since 4-6-2020.

Program Updates

AAA

- No new updates since 4-9-2020.

OCS

- For childcare resources, please share ELRC contact information (elrc5@alleghenycounty.us or 412-350-3577) with your essential employees.
- We have moved employment information and resources to [our website](#).
- Homeless network
 - We are still accepting referrals for the isolation and quarantine hotel.
 - The provider call is on Tuesdays at 9:30 am. Call-in information is in the slide presentation.

Behavioral Health

- PA DHS issued a fingerprinting update.
 - The fingerprinting requirement is not waived because there has been no change to federal laws.
 - Anyone needing fingerprinting should call the closest location for operating hours or see the [Pennsylvania Statewide interactive MAP of IdentGO locations](#).
- DDAP is offering the following trainings:
 - [When All that Changes is Everything](#) – a series of three online discussions
 - [Self-Care and Empathy](#) virtual training on 4-14-2020 at 9am or 4-20-2020 at 9 am
- As a reminder, The FCC published a new Telehealth Funding Opportunity.
 - [Directions to apply](#) can be found here.
- Early intervention
 - Approval has been granted to expand all infant/toddler early intervention services delivered and reimbursed using tele-intervention.
 - Social work and nursing may now be provided (and billed) via tele-intervention.
 - Guidelines can be viewed at <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Quick-Tips/Documents/PROMISeQuickTip242.pdf>.
 - EI referrals are down significantly from pre-COVID levels.
 - Receiving only 20-30 referrals per week.
 - Evaluations are still being scheduled and services are available.

OID/Autism

- We are seeing low availability of over the counter (OTC) drugs such as Tylenol in stores.
 - Check your supply and contact your pharmacist to make sure you will have enough.
- As a reminder, continue to follow local information and directives, along with guidance from the PA Department of Health and the PA Office of Developmental Programs.
 - Links to COVID-19 updates are available at MyODP.org <https://www.myodp.org/mod/page/view.php?id=26808>.

CYF

- We have been working with A Second Chance Inc. to identify/train respite homes to shelter children safely when their parents are COVID-19 positive and other childcare supports are not available. We will share more details soon.
- A Second Chance is still providing fingerprinting at their Frankstown Ave. location.
- DHS is also looking into opening a fingerprinting site downtown.
 - We hope to have details next week.

- As a reminder, [Strategies for Home Visits](#) guidance has been posted on our website.
- Transition Age Youth: Supports for young people aged 14 to 29:
 - Education and enrichment specialists, CYF transition planners, Youth Support Partners, justice related services, 412 Youth Zone and YV Life Set staff are still connecting with youth and finding ways to support them during this time.
 - Virtual peer support specifically for LGBTQIA+ youth who may be struggling during this time is also available.
 - Other Web Resources:
 - [Youth Virtual Drop-In Meetings](#) are being held to promote social interaction every Monday and Friday from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm.
 - View a [Town Hall Meeting](#) about foster youth, organized by the Children’s Bureau.

Courts/Jail

- No new updates since 4-8-2020.

Transportation

- No new updates since 4-9-2020.

How to Reach Us

- Email us at DHS-COVID19planning@alleghenycounty.us with questions. Use the subject line to indicate the type of question you are submitting (e.g., program area, DHS operations).
- The COVD Hotline is 2-1-1 and the Health Department’s line is 687-2243.
- See the slide presentation for other key contacts.

SEE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS RAISED AT TODAY’S CALL.