



# **COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting**

## **April 15, 2020**



## General Information

As of the time of this meeting (4-15-2020 at 4:30 pm) there are 904 confirmed cases and 26 deaths in the County.

- The Health Department's [dashboard](#) provides additional information.
- The Hospital Association of Pennsylvania's [dashboard](#) shows information such as bed utilization.

### Supplies Update

ACES is no longer fulfilling supply orders for PPE due to the Governor's order to shift to a state-wide distribution model.

- We are developing a new request process to help you source PPE and other supplies. We expect to share updates on Friday's call (4-17-2020).

PA Correctional Industries (PCI) is not selling any PPE.

Literacy Pittsburgh has posted [informational videos](#) on key COVID-19 topics in various languages.

Robin Orlando joined the call to talk about Weekly Wellness Check-ins: new e-mail updates that will be sent out from the Trauma Resource Library every Wednesday.

- They will cover how we can support ourselves, staff and families in maintaining health and well-being using the framework of the SAMHSA wheel.
- More wellness resources can be found [here](#).
- Please send ideas and resources that can be shared on the site to [DHSTraumaThinkTank@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:DHSTraumaThinkTank@AlleghenyCounty.US).
- You can subscribe to these emails at [Robin.Orlando@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:Robin.Orlando@AlleghenyCounty.US).

As a reminder, the Allegheny County Health Department and DHS are teaming up to gather the voices of community leaders just like you for a conversation about the county's COVID-19 Crisis Response – past, present and future. We are particularly interested in how we can best:

- Reach residents of color, new arrivals who are non-English speakers and residents of low-income communities with important life-saving messages.
- Engage with communities regarding the placement of quarantine/ isolation facilities in our neighborhoods.
- Present life-saving information in a way that it is accepted as helpful and non-threatening.

Here is the schedule of remaining sessions:

- COVID-19 and the Latinx Community: Thursday, April 16; 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- COVID-19 and Immigrant and Refugee Communities: Friday, April 17; 3:00 – 4:00 PM

To register your participation, please visit:

[https://alleghenycounty.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_b8VzNGmWPf0C28Z](https://alleghenycounty.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b8VzNGmWPf0C28Z).

We are continuing to improve our website, located at [www.bit.ly/COVID19DHSProviders](http://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 site.

- You can reach us by email at [DHS-COVID19planning@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHS-COVID19planning@alleghenycounty.us). We will answer all questions and elevate issues to inform the network.

## Legislative/Policy Updates

### Federal updates

- Update on Federal Economic Impact Payments (Stimulus Checks):
  - Individuals who traditionally do not file taxes: The IRS has established a portal (link on this [page](#)) for non-filers to submit basic information to be eligible to receive a payment and provide direct deposit information, if desired.
  - Today, the IRS released another portal, "[Get My Payment](#)," enabling taxpayers to get the status of their payment. Individuals can also use this portal to provide bank information to receive their payment via direct deposit, if they didn't do so when filing taxes.
- Possible fourth wave federal stimulus update: No headway on negotiations has yet been made in the Senate, which is not in session again until Thursday.

### State and local updates

- PA DHS is enabling temporary protections for CHIP participants during this crisis to prevent denials or disenrollment for administrative or financial reasons, allow flexibilities for paying premiums, and allow self-attestation for information on an application/renewal.
- Yesterday, Republicans in the PA House advanced SB 613, which would require Gov. Wolf to amend his business closure orders to allow almost any business to operate if it follows CDC safety guidelines.
  - The Senate is voting on House amendments today – Gov. Wolf has not indicated yet if he will veto the bill, but it seems likely as Secretary Levine has voiced strong opposition.
- Pittsburgh City Council is discussing a bill to create additional community vegetable gardens on city lots to help community members in need of food.

## Food

A Second Chance Inc. delivered 1500 meals to families in Penn Hills.

The Food Access Provider call is on Tuesdays at 3:30 pm. See slide presentation for call-in information.

412 Food Rescue is piloting home delivery, but please do not inform residents to contact them directly.

- Nonprofits may reach out to [info@412foodrescue.org](mailto:info@412foodrescue.org) if they have clients needing home delivery service.

How to help individuals and families access food:

1. Encourage families/individuals to apply for public assistance.
  - [Food Bank](#) and [Just Harvest](#) both offer help with applications.
  - Applications can be submitted online or by mail. Please print out some applications to have on-hand.

- Applications in several languages can be found and printed: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/Apply-for-Benefits.aspx> .
2. Helping families/individuals find and access food
- Local pantries and other local emergency food options are the best options—they have fewer crowds than the large-scale Food Bank distributions.
    - Use [this map](#) or "Get Help" on the [Food Bank website](#) to identify pantries near their home.
    - New flexibility has been put in place to allow providers to pick up for food for individuals/families. Call the pantry in advance to learn about documentation requirements.
  - Grab and Go sites for families with children
    - Use [this map](#) or "Grab and Go" on the [Food Bank website](#) to identify the closest Grab and Go location.
    - Flexibility may be in place to allow providers to pick up for households. Call the site in advance to learn about documentation requirements,
  - Large scale food bank distributions
    - Only recommend this avenue to households without access to a local food pantry.
  - Support with home delivery
    - Households unable to get to a distribution site, whose local pantry is not offering home delivery, should call 2-1-1.

#### AAA food information

- AAA just received 800 FEMA shelf-stable meals. In total, we have over 3,000 meals that will be distributed shortly.

### **Program Updates**

#### AAA

- To maintain senior morale and combat isolation, we are mailing letters to older adults; Senior Centers are making hundreds of phone calls to participants weekly.
- SeniorLine is making an effort to contact residents of Allegheny County high-rise buildings to ensure that they have access to services.

#### OCS

- For childcare resources, please share ELRC contact information ([elrc5@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:elrc5@alleghenycounty.us) or 412-350-3577) with your essential employees.
  - We are starting to think about summer-specific guidance.
- Encourage families you know to take the Family Strengths Survey.
  - [Click here to take the Family Strengths Survey.](#)
  - [Haz clic aquí para tomar la Encuesta Fuerzas de la Familia.](#)
  - To take the Family Strengths Survey by phone, dial (412) 692-8026.

- Family Center physical locations are closed, but staff are available to support families through [formula and diaper distributions](#) and online activities like story times. Call 412-350-6611 or 2-1-1 to find the center closest to you.
- We have moved employment information and resources to [our website](#).
- Homeless network
  - DHS will distribute a medical needs survey this week. Please complete the survey ASAP.
  - Safe Haven Hotel
    - There are about 40 people housed at the safe haven hotel.
    - Please explain the nature of isolation and quarantine to clients before referring them.
    - Referrals are being accepted from homelessness shelters, street outreach providers, and refugee and immigrant services. Any system with an individual in urgent need of safe haven should make a referral.
      - Jail referral contact: Jenn Batterton  
[Jennifer.Batterton@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:Jennifer.Batterton@AlleghenyCounty.US)
      - OBH referral contact: Diane Johnson  
[Diane.Johnson@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:Diane.Johnson@AlleghenyCounty.US)
    - CHS still needs staff for weekend shifts; please refer people to [apply here](#).
  - As a reminder, a HUD Waiver was approved on 4-9-2020. Provider guidance can be found in the slide presentation.
    - If you have any questions related to implementation, please email all of the following: Cynthia Shields [Cynthia.shields@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Cynthia.shields@alleghenycounty.us), Rob Eamigh [Robert.Eamigh@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Robert.Eamigh@alleghenycounty.us) and Kate Holko [Kathryn.Holko@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Kathryn.Holko@alleghenycounty.us).
  - The Provider Network Meeting is held every Tuesday at 9:30 am.
    - Call-in information can be found in the slide presentation.

### Behavioral Health

- SAMHSA has issued [guidance for individuals using telehealth](#).
- Training Opportunities
  - The National Council for Behavioral Health is holding an upcoming [Office Hours Session on Residential Treatment](#) on 4-16-2020 at 3 pm.
  - The Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania (CCGP) is holding a webinar, [The Professional Impacts of the COVID-19 Crisis: A Look into the Importance of Self-Care and Resilience](#), on 4-23-2020 at 2 pm.
  - Cognitive Behavior Institute is holding a webinar, [Assessment of Trauma-Related Disorders and the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), on 4-21-2020 at 9 am.
- DDAP has issued: Guidance to Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery Regarding Displaced COVID-19 Positive Clients. We are working to interpret this guidance and will share more with you soon.
- Our next Behavioral Health Provider meeting is on 4-16-2020 at 10 am. See slide for call-in information.

- Our next Behavioral Health Treatment and Housing Provider Meeting is on 4-17-2020 at 9 am. See slide for call-in information.
- Early intervention
  - No new updates since 4-13-2020.

#### OID/Autism

- A Health-Related Screening Tools (HRST) Webinar: “COVID-19 and the HRST: Scoring Impacts” will be held on 4-20-2020 at 3 pm.
- KEPRO HCQU issued a [packet of key documents](#), including a helpful rehearsal guide for preparing people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to reduce the spread of infection.
- As a reminder, continue to follow local information and directives, along with the PA Department of Health and the State Office of Developmental Programs. There are links to COVID-19 updates on MyODP.org <https://www.myodp.org/mod/page/view.php?id=26808>.

#### CYF

- April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month.
- Resources for recognizing signs of abuse and neglect:
  - Visit <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/> for information on reporting abuse and neglect.
  - [Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance](#), to provide training to school personnel, child care staff, clergy, law enforcement, public and private social service agencies, and social service professionals.
  - [Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics](#), to provide training to physicians, school nurses, hospital staff and Emergency Medical Service providers.
  - [The University of Pittsburgh’s Child Welfare Resource Center](#), to develop free, web-based training. This training is approved for mandated and permissive reporters in accordance with Act 126 of 2012 and Act 31 of 2104.
  - View a [list of additional approved courses](#) for child abuse recognition and reporting training for mandated reporters.
  - DHS staff member Michael Gill ([Michael.Gill@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:Michael.Gill@AlleghenyCounty.US)) can provide training on this topic.
- Fingerprinting
  - Today, the Children’s Bureau/HHS announced that it is allowing states flexibility on the hiring fingerprint requirement, **BUT** we need state law changes in PA before we can benefit from this announcement.
  - On 4-23-2020, from 9-5, DHS will host a mobile fingerprinting site at 1 Smithfield Street in the Liberty Conference Room.
    - If you have individuals who require fingerprinting, please let us know how many, along with their names and contact information, by COB on Friday 4-17-2020, to: [Nicole.Rohm@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Nicole.Rohm@alleghenycounty.us).
  - Other Locations
    - ASCI is still offering fingerprinting from 9 am-12 pm at their Penn Hills location.
    - Identogo is also offering fingerprinting, Monday – Friday, in its East Pittsburgh site (9 am - 1:30 pm) and its Monroeville site (9 am - 7 pm).

- Supporting strong parent-child relationships resources:
  - [Five Tips to Make the Most of Video Chats](#)
  - [Separated from Your Young Child?](#)
  - [Staying Connected While Separated from Your Young Child](#)
  - [Children's Bureau event](#) (for providers) on 4-21-2020

#### 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](mailto: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 COVID Hotline is 2-1-1 and the Health Department's line is 412-687-2243.
- See the slide presentation for other key contacts.

**SEE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS RAISED AT TODAY'S CALL**