



**COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting**

**April 22, 2021**



## General Information

As a reminder, DHS Provider Meetings are held on Thursdays at 4:30 pm.

As a reminder, DHS has [released two solicitations](#):

- RFQ for Design, Content and Digital Strategy
  - Six categories of work; Applicants may seek qualification for any/all categories
  - Proposals due April 30
- RFP for Housing Mobility Services for Families in the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)
  - Proposals due tomorrow, April 23

Phil Koch of The Pittsburgh Foundation joined the call to share an update on the Nonprofit Economic Emergency Delivery Systems (NEEDS) Grant Program

- TPF has been working with legislators to encourage them to set aside federal stimulus money for grants of up to \$500K for human services nonprofits, through the NEEDS legislation.
- In the legislation, human services is broadly defined as organizations serving vulnerable populations, including childcare centers, domestic violence centers, early intervention service providers, food banks, career training institutions, organizations serving individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, etc.
- HB 1116 has a primary sponsor (Natalie Mihalek) in the house and 12 cosponsors, and a primary sponsor (Judy Ward) in the senate.
- TPF connected with 26 community foundations, United Ways and Affinity Groups across the Commonwealth to support the legislation
- TPF's next step is to have meetings with Leadership: prime sponsors, caucus leadership, administration officials

Ama Danso-Ayesu of the Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services and Melissa Breckenridge joined the call to discuss Pathway to Care & Recovery

- Pathway is a front door to information, services and support, open 365/24/7 with a central downtown location with access to substance use information, services and support with on-site walk in
- For residents of Allegheny County who have challenges around alcohol and/or other drugs and want information, support and/or help (age 14+)
- Services include: Information, peer support, screening, level of care assessment, referral and support—right up to admission, MAT education, case management, connection to other human services through warm hand-offs

- There is an onsite team and a mobile team. The mobile team consists of drug and alcohol Case Managers and Certified Recovery Specialists who respond to calls from police, ED, crisis response teams, families and others.
- Safe Place to Stay will open in mid-2021 for individuals who have received a level of care assessment, are awaiting admission to a treatment slot, and need additional support while waiting
- Diversion and Reentry services are also available.
- Client numbers are growing. Pathway served over 70 people in March, has had over 165 in-person visits, dispatched 160 EC teams and received 256 incoming calls.
- Look for 10 billboards and 6 bus shelter advertisements around the Pittsburgh area.
- Contact Information
  - Call Pathway to Care and Recovery directly at: 412-325-7550
  - Walk-in to Pathway to Care and Recovery at: 326 Third Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15222
  - Call PA Get Help Now at 1-800-662-HELP to be connected to Allegheny County's services, including Pathway to Care and Recovery
  - For questions about the program contact [mbreckenridge@renewalinc.com](mailto:mbreckenridge@renewalinc.com) or [Ama.Danso-Ayesu@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:Ama.Danso-Ayesu@AlleghenyCounty.US)

Tanya Baronti, Director, United for Children and Amy Malen, DHS Assistant Deputy, Family and Community Strengthening, joined the call to discuss summer programming.

- It's not too early to start to think and talk about summer with the families you are working with!
- To find programs:
  - Check with your school/school district – many are running programs
    - PPS is running Summer BOOST programming for K-7 (full day at many sites) and 8-11 (half day at 4 sites)
  - Get credit recovery programs approved by the child's school
  - Search for summer camps and other summer programming (<https://find.alleghenychildcare.org/>)
  - Don't forget about summer employment! Students ages 14-21 can earn money and work experience in the [Learn & Earn](#) program.
- Funding for summer programming
  - Many programs throughout the community are free or offer scholarships (ask early!)
  - Funding is available to maximize the number of free seats in Allegheny County this summer!
  - For programs with a fee:

- Working parents can leverage the childcare subsidy (contact ELRC at 412.350.3577 or [elrc5@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:elrc5@alleghenycounty.us)) for children up to age 12. Website: <https://elrc5.alleghenycounty.us/families-afford-child-care>
  - If a student is involved with CYF, talk to a caseworker about funding.
  - If a student needs credit recovery and is experiencing a housing crisis, the AIU Education for Children & Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program can help
- If you have any questions, contact [Focus\\_Attendance@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Focus_Attendance@alleghenycounty.us) or call 412-918-9206
- Out-of-school time summer programs serving pre-K-12<sup>th</sup> grade can apply for funding from several local partners at [this link](#). Applications are due at noon on Monday, April 26. Direct questions to Tanya Baronti ([Tanya.Baronti@unitedwayswpa.org](mailto:Tanya.Baronti@unitedwayswpa.org)). Applicants must be a 501c3 or have a fiduciary.

As a reminder, the tax deadline was extended to May 17!

- Here are some specific situations where an individual may receive money by filing taxes:
  - If individuals don't usually file taxes because lack of earnings from work or receiving disability benefits, may not have received stimulus payments
  - If job loss or income dropped in 2020, should file taxes so the IRS has most recent income information
  - If children are living in a household in 2020, may be eligible for another payment later in 2021
  - If tax was withheld from 2020 unemployment benefits, individual should file taxes, as a portion of 2020 unemployment benefits are no longer taxable and could result in a tax refund
- Client self-sign-up for local tax assistance: [getyourrefund.org/justharvest](http://getyourrefund.org/justharvest)
- Email Kristie Weiland Stagno ([KristieW@justharvest.org](mailto:KristieW@justharvest.org)) to refer a client who has no internet access or other barriers (e.g., language, disability, homelessness) that make virtual tax prep impossible. Include the client's name and phone number.

May 3rd is the last day to register for the May 18th primary election.

- [Voter Registration Application \(Online\)](#)
- [Mail-In/Absentee Ballot Application \(Online\)](#) - To vote using an absentee or mail-in ballot, completed applications must be received in the Allegheny County Board of Elections office by 5:00 PM on May 11th. The deadline to return your voted absentee or mail-in ballot is 8:00 PM on May 18th.

- [Mail-In/Absentee Ballot Tracker](#) – Track the status of your mail-in or absentee ballot, if your application has been received, if your ballot has been mailed, and if your completed ballot has been received.

#### Covid-19 Metrics

- Cases are starting to decline. PA state’s early warning system dashboard can be found here <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Monitoring-Dashboard.aspx>.
- Almost half of Allegheny County residents have received one shot, but we saw a decrease in the number of vaccines administered last week. <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Vaccine/Pages/Dashboard.aspx>

We encourage you to sign up for your vaccination.

- ACHD First Dose Clinics in Castle Shannon, Ross, Hill District, McKeesport
  - [Vax4.alleghenycounty.us](http://Vax4.alleghenycounty.us) or call 2-1-1

### Legislative/Policy Updates

#### State and Local Updates

- In a surprise reversal, the PA Senate advanced a House bill out of Committee to allow a two-year window to expand the statute of limitations on bringing lawsuits for child sex abuse survivors.
  - This bill was originally going to be a constitutional amendment question that would have appeared on the May ballot, but was disqualified due to a Department of State advertising error.
  - If passed by the entire Senate and signed by the Governor, the law would become effective immediately.
- Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) has posted an Employment Support Services grant opportunity.
  - *Who May Apply:* DDAP licensed treatment providers with employment support services that are separate from the clinical programming offered under their license
  - *Use:* Employment support services, such as vocational assessments, resume writing, interviewing skills, job placement, and transportation assistance related to employment.
  - *Funds:* Up to \$400,000 for an 18-month period. A total of \$2.7 million is available statewide.
  - *Application Deadline:* May 17 at 12:00 PM
  - *Visit:* [Funding opportunities link](#) and choose "GIFA 21-02 Employment Support Services"
- The Port Authority seeks public comment on raising bus fares to \$2.75 and canceling transfer fees for prepaid Connect Card users.

- People who pay in cash would continue to pay \$2.75 every time they board, while ConnectCard users would have free transfers during a 3-hour window.
- Two additional virtual meetings occurring: Friday, April 30 and Tuesday, May 4.
- [More information on the meetings and making online public comments here.](#)
- President Judge Clark issued an order on April 19, 2021 related to the resumption of jury trials.
  - Jury selection for the Criminal Division will resume on April 27, 2021
  - The Administrative Judge for the Criminal Division will determine which cases proceed to jury selection.
  - Jury selection will take place at the David Lawrence Convention Center.
  - Health and safety measures will be in effect for selection and trials.
  - All emergency operations orders can be found here:
  - <https://www.alleghenycourts.us/administration/EmergencyOperations.aspx>

### **Program Updates**

None today

### **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. For basic needs assistance or general COVID-19 inquiries call the 24/7 COVID-19 Hotline at 1-888-856-2774. Language services are available.
- See the slide presentation for other key contacts.

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