



**COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting**  
**March 23, 2020**



## **General Information**

As of now, all information is available at [www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us](http://www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us). Questions can be directed to us via email [DHS-COVID19Planning@AlleghenyCounty.us](mailto:DHS-COVID19Planning@AlleghenyCounty.us) and we will continue to put Frequently-Asked Questions online.

The state COVID-19 hotline is 888-856-2774

As of this meeting (3/23/2020 at 4:30pm), Allegheny County had 48 confirmed cases and one death.

Governor ordered all Allegheny County residents to stay at home beginning Monday at 8pm. This does NOT apply to life-sustaining businesses, under which we fall. Some providers have received a notice from the state designating them as essential services. Some were visited by law enforcement today. If you are visited by law enforcement, show them the notice designating your program as essential, if you have one, and please let us know. We are continuing to work on guidelines but if you have any questions or concerns, contact us and we will guide you.

## **Legislative/Policy Updates**

We conducted a briefing with congressional delegates this morning. We talked to them about the need to waive the FBI fingerprint checks so that we can hire staff quickly. We also raised the issue of paying staff of agencies/programs that were forced to close.

HHS continues to issue guidance about telehealth and teletherapy, to make it easier for people to access.

The census visits to households originally scheduled for early May has been pushed back to May 28<sup>th</sup>.

PA legislators in talks to postpone the state primary until June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

PEMA is currently attempting to gather cost estimates. All agencies are asked to complete the survey link beginning on March 30<sup>th</sup>; please populate the survey with cost estimates and submit each Monday. The survey link (<https://arcg.is/1qDXiH>) is available on the slide presentation and at [www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us](http://www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us).

There was no United Way update today, although providers can contact Wendy (contact info on slide) for volunteers; United Way is hosting registration for specific events on its website.

Essential Services definition changed status of the food network, BH early intervention and child welfare service locations to “At-Risk.”

## **Food**

The food distribution map is located in the food section of the website. Please feel free to blast it to your networks. There is a tab that allows you to add to or update specific sites. Please email us if you have new addresses or are aware of a site that’s NOT distributing food.

[AAA food information](#)

- JCC is providing kosher grab-and-go meals on Mondays and Wednesdays, 11am – 2pm. They also have a drive-in service as of Monday.
- All meals in the aging system are frozen, except for kosher meals
- 2 larger providers have indicated that they have the capacity to increase meal production should the need arise.

#### OCS food information

- Food sites have moved from stable to at-risk because the need is increasing AND exposure is also resulting in closure of certain sites.
- School districts are permitted to provide multiple meals at a time.
- OCS is developing a survey to identify food production facilities and supplies and needs; need information will be put out to the public to connect needs with resources.
- Provider calls are being held on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- WIC information:
  - McKeesport, Mt. Oliver, Wilkinsburg and downtown Pittsburgh sites are moving to a modified operating schedule. Springdale WIC is open for pick-up on Thursdays and Fridays.
  - Contact staff ahead of time to schedule benefit pickup, leave children at home to reduce the risk of exposure, and stay home if you are not feeling well.

### **Program Updates**

#### AAA

- Use emergency operating plans for in-home services.
- Providers are screening for COVID-19, with an approved screening tool, prior to face-to-face visits.
- We are triaging peoples' needs with a scale to identify case complexity and frailty.
- In-home care continues and all consumers are receiving personal care. The only change (except for grocery shopping) is in home support/light housekeeping, which will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Use senior line for questions.
- Map is on county's COVID-19 page and at [www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us](http://www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us).

#### OCS

- Childcare for essential employees:
  - We are currently having conversations with employers about childcare for essential employees.
  - We are exploring one-on-one support.
  - A couple of childcare providers are scheduled to open next Monday for DHS and DHS provider network staff. We will provide information as it becomes available.
  - Tying Together is developing safety guidelines for centers that will reopen.
- Homeless network:
  - Not much change on risk scores.

- Staff are calling off more quickly.
- We continue to hear that getting necessary supplies is challenging.
- New quarantine/isolation centers are opening
  - New facilities (33 units staffed by CHS) for those in congregate care who need to be quarantined. The population will be highly vulnerable due to age and underlying health issues but will not be in need of complete isolation.
  - New 16-unit facility for families receiving any DHS service will be staffed by Auberle with support from ACTION Housing.
  - Working to identify a hotel to isolate/quarantine anybody, throughout DHS service areas, who needs to be isolated. We are projecting 130-220 units that will be staffed with the help of Pittsburgh Mercy.
- Hygiene stations, porto-johns and water buffalos were installed, with the help of Pittsburgh Mercy, at three camps: Second Avenue, Cupples Stadium and the Casino. These are available to anyone, not just those in the camps.
- Provider work group call scheduled for 9:30 am on Tuesday, March 24 and every Tuesday thereafter (except for March 31<sup>st</sup> due to the HAB meeting). All homeless service providers are encouraged to attend, to share what they are seeing and how they are managing. Call 267-368-7515 and enter conference ID 693 771 690.

### Behavioral Health

- Funding for various levels of care may be changing – we will keep you posted.
- We are mindful of provider challenges to maintaining the volume of service to draw down available funding. We are working with CCBH and PADHS to maintain services during this critical time.
- NACBHDD is hosting a best practices call on Wednesday, 3/25. Anyone may log-in until the call fills up. Log-in information is on the slide presentation.
- The second OBH, AHCI and CCBH provider call is scheduled for Thursday, 3/26.
- We are in the process of setting up weekly calls for more specific behavioral health communities.
- OHMSAS and OCYF are finalizing guidelines on visitation at residential treatment facilities. Right now, visitation is prohibited, although there are exceptions (requiring screening).
- Possible changes to referral and screening for residential care may impact the overall system.
- Early intervention services, other than social work, have been approved for videoconferencing. It is still unclear how assessment will be completed, because now they still require a face-to-face meeting.
- Drug and alcohol grant funds may be used for gambling assessments and outpatient services.
- State has asked that we make clear the fact that there are sufficient office and clinic hours for new and established patients who do not choose or cannot receive telehealth services in their home.

### OID

- Incident management staff started last week, and will continue weekly, to monitor staffing issues and what to do about quarantine for those who need it. We want to hear from you (but if you're working with other DHS teams on service authorizations and monitoring, please continue to do so).
- Please see links in slide presentation for up-to-date local information.

- We anticipate state waiver amendments from ODP. We will share information as it becomes available.

### CYF

- Staff is currently relatively stable with limited call-offs. Many staff are able to work remotely. We are concerned about adequate supplies of necessary items (sanitation, etc.) and are talking with providers about that.
- Some service locations are unstable because of the stay-at-home order. Some locations had to close.
- We are having provider calls in the morning and answering questions/making decisions later in the day.
- See earlier note about ACF kinship/foster care teleconference plans.
- Remain mindful of safety considerations – make sure medications, firearms and poisonous substances are secured (we have lockboxes available for families that want them).
- Family Links is identifying staff for a secured facility for up to 15 youth who may become diagnosed with COVID-19. YSP unit is identifying support partners.

### Courts

- Judge Clark and/or Eaton joining our call Tuesday, 3/24. They will advise us on changes based on the stay-at-home order.

### Transportation

- As of last Friday, all program non-MATP transportation was placed on hold. Traveler's Aid will be closed for two weeks beginning on March 31<sup>st</sup>. They are going to be distributing ride tickets/passes for April beginning on March 24<sup>th</sup>; May's ticket process will be determined later. They will re-evaluate during the week of April 13<sup>th</sup>, and this might be updated; in the meantime, we are in discussions with the Health Department on continuing transportation for patients needing dialysis and other life-sustaining treatments (including MAT). They are currently being referred to MATP for ACCESS.
- Currently, Traveler's Aid is limiting the number of clients in their office for safety reasons and focusing on issuing replacements for cards that are not working (unable to issue replacements for lost or stolen cards or to sign up new clients).

### **Key Contacts**

- [DHS-COVID19planning@allegHENYcounty.us](mailto:DHS-COVID19planning@allegHENYcounty.us) for questions. Use the subject line to indicate the type of question you are submitting (e.g., program area, DHS operations).
- See the slide presentation for other key contacts.

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