



COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting

April 13, 2020



General Information

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

- We will call special meetings if the need arises.

As of the time of this meeting (4-13-2020 at 4:30 pm) there are 876 confirmed cases and 21 deaths in the County.

- The Health Department's [dashboard](#) provides additional information.

The Allegheny County Health Department and Department of Human Services 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 neighborhoods.
- Present life-saving information in a way that it is accepted as helpful and non-threatening.

There are 4 scheduled sessions:

- COVID-19 and the African American/Black Community: Tuesday, April 14; 1:00 – 2:00 PM
- COVID-19 and the Faith Community: Tuesday, April 14; 3:00 – 4:00 PM
- 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.a21.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b8VzNGmWPf0C28Z.

DHS Guidance for all Housing/Residential Providers

As a reminder, we have created a [toolkit for residential providers](#): Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Behavioral Health Residentially Based Care/Services, Youth Congregate Care, Emergency Shelters and other housing providers.

- We worked closely with the Allegheny County Health Department; it draws on their guidance as well as guidance provided by the CDC, the PA Department of Health and the 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 when combined with 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 do a quick case conference with you to coordinate appropriate supports.

- Screening
 - Determine if client has a fever.
 - Ask the client “Do you have a new or worsening cough today?”
 - Ask the client if they have been exposed.
 - If yes, follow the procedure in the guidance document and use standard protocols for medical emergencies.
- Intake and isolation protocols: 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 on the top of the site.
- 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

- Update on Federal Economic Impact Payments (Stimulus Checks)
 - The IRS has released a portal for non-filers to submit basic information to be eligible to receive a check (link on this page): Social Security number, date of birth, address, email address and dependents. "Non-filers" can provide direct deposit information to receive the check sooner.
 - IRS is expected to release information by April 17th enabling taxpayers to get the status of their check. This new portal will also enable taxpayers to provide direct deposit info to receive the check, if they didn't do so when filing taxes.
- Possible fourth wave Federal stimulus update: No headway on negotiations in the Senate, which is not in session again until Thursday.

State and local updates

- The PA Department of Labor is beginning to send out expanded federal unemployment compensation payments in addition to regular state unemployment benefits.
 - Provides an additional \$600 per week (added to the state's weekly payment of up to \$572) and makes self-employed, independent contractors and gig workers eligible for benefits
 - Extends unemployment compensation benefits for an additional 13 weeks.
- Gov. Wolf will reduce state prisons populations after 11 COVID-19 cases were found in Montgomery County prison.
 - The Executive Order creates a temporary reprieve program that will release up to 1,800 non-violent offenders, throughout the system, nearing the end of their sentence.
- The Allegheny County Executive requested an all-mail-in ballot directive from Gov. Wolf for the June 2nd primary.

Food

We hope to have more summer food distribution information to share with you soon. 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.
- 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
 - Safe Haven Hotel
 - There are about 30 people housed at the safe haven hotel.
 - Referrals now being accepted from homeless shelters, street outreach providers, and refugee and immigrant services. This week, the referral system will be in place for OBH and jail. Any other system with an individual in urgent need of safe haven should reach out to DHS.
 - CHS still needs staff for weekend shifts, please refer people to [apply here](#).
 - A HUD Waiver was approved on 4-9-20. Provider guidance is as follows:
 - PSH: Projects must reasonably believe that a participant has a disability, and staff should move forward with securing housing and written documentation; efforts and due diligence to secure verification should be reflected in case notes.
 - PSH/RRH: Virtual monthly visits from case managers are required to ensure that participants are managing during the COVID-19 crisis.
 - HQS initial inspections: Virtual tours must be completed before participants sign a lease; a physical inspection must occur within 6 months of the signed lease date.
 - HQS reinspection: Case managers should visually inspect the unit during face-to-face visits or conduct virtual walk-throughs with participants until actual re-inspection occurs.

- One-year leases are preferred; they should be no shorter than 3 months and may be month-to-month.
- If you have any questions related to implementation, please email all of the following people: Cynthia Shields Cynthia.shields@alleghenycounty.us, Rob Eamigh Robert.Eamigh@alleghenycounty.us and Kate Holko Kathryn.Holko@alleghenycounty.us.
- A provider network meeting is held every Tuesday at 9:30 am; call-in information is in the slide presentation.

Behavioral Health

- DDAP shared information on how to order supplies (cloth masks, gowns, sanitizer, bar soap) from PA Correctional Industries through pci@pa.gov.
- 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 9 am or 4-20-2020 at 9 am
- Early intervention
 - As a reminder, 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 are linked here: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Quick-Tips/Documents/PROMISeQuickTip242.pdf>.

OID/Autism

- [ODP Announcement 20-044](#) – This Supports Coordinator Check-in for Well Being tool is to be used when conducting weekly check-in calls with individuals, caregivers and/or staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - It could also be useful for other staff.
- The Center for Dignity in Healthcare for People with Disabilities published a [Safeguard Against Disability Discrimination During COVID-19 Fact Sheet](#). It contains tips to help make sure people get the care that they need.
- 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

- No new updates since 4-10-2020.

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 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