



# **COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting**

## **June 11, 2020**



## General Information

Beginning next week (the week of June 15<sup>th</sup>), we will only hold DHS Provider Meetings once per week on Thursdays.

What topics should we address in future provider calls? Take this poll to share your input:

<https://tinyurl.com/y9lhvoec>

## COVID-19 Metrics

Allegheny County is below the following benchmark:

- Diagnostic testing capacity

Allegheny County is meeting the following benchmarks:

- Decline in new cases: we have seen a decline over the last week
- New cases below threshold: we have always been below the PA threshold over a rolling 14-day period. UPenn projects that new cases will decline.
- Decline in total hospitalizations: we have seen declines in the past two weeks
- Decline in Deaths: We have a very low death rate and a decline in deaths.
- Increase or steady number of tests: we have seen an increase in the number pf tests administered over the last 4 weeks.
- ICU bed capacity: we have not hit 90%
- Percent of positive tests: our average positive rate is low at around 2.6% and is declining.
- Rate of transmission below 1: we are at .77

## Emerging Needs Metrics

We are looking at the following categories:

- Food
  - 2-1-1 calls for food assistance: There was a 300% increase in calls for food assistance the week of the stay-at-home order. There has been a downward trend in calls since early April.
  - SNAP Applications: Applications for SNAP benefits are up 25% from February through April 2020 (7,294 to 9,082). This is lower than we would expect. We want to invest in helping people to apply.
- Employment
  - Unemployment Insurance Claims: From the week of 3/7/2020 (1,188) to the week of 4/4/2020 (34,888), initial claims increased by 2,836%. The most recent week of 5/30/2020 (2,059) still shows a 73% increase from the week of 3/7/2020. We are expecting a benefits cliff in January when these run out. There is also a racial gap: the rate of claims for Black residents is 8.7 percentage points more than for White residents.
- Mental Health
  - There is a lag in these data. Since we entered the yellow phase (as compared to the stay-at-home phase), involuntary commitments are up 20%, calls for IRES are up 12% and calls for Resolve are up 8%.
- Housing & Homelessness
  - Calls to the Link and daily shelter population counts remain down.
  - Going forward, we need to monitor evictions and foreclosures. We know that there are disparities in housing insecurity. Black residents are more likely to have missed the last month's rent and be concerned about paying next month's rent.
- Health insurance

- Applications for Medical Assistance are up 41% from February to April 2020 (12,894 to 18,130).
- We will continue to monitor aging services, child welfare and the criminal justice system
  - Aging
    - Calls for elder abuse remain down (58% decrease from 3/8 – 6/4/2020 compared to 12/10/2019 – 3/7/2020.)
    - Calls to Senior Line are up 13% since the we entered the yellow phase (as compared to the stay-at-home phase).
  - Child Welfare
    - Calls to child welfare remain below pre-COVID levels since we entered the yellow phase (as compared to the stay-at-home phase), but they have increased 12%.
  - Criminal Justice
    - Bookings, the average daily jail population and criminal filings are lower than pre-COVID levels, but average weekly jail bookings are up 36% from the stay-at-home period compared to the yellow phase and average weekly criminal filings are up 67%.

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

- [The Operational Changes Tracker](#) is live.
- 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.
- Please continue to submit stories and photos of how you are meeting needs during this time to [Evelyn.Whitehill@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:Evelyn.Whitehill@AlleghenyCounty.US)

## Legislative/Policy Updates

No new updates since 6/8/2020.

## Food

### Food Bank Data

- The Food Bank is receiving fewer calls about food. This does not necessarily mean that the need is going away, but perhaps that people have been successfully connected to the resources that they need.

There is a Farmers to Families distribution happening in Clairton this Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, from 1-3 pm at Clairton High School and one happening in the North Side on Saturday June 13<sup>th</sup>, from 10 am-noon at Gold Lot 1A.

The Food Access Call is on Tuesdays at 3:30 pm. Call-in information can be found in the slide presentation.

### AAA food information

- No new updates since 6/4/2020.

## Program Updates

### AAA

- Older Adult Protective Services Reports of Need are anticipated to return to normal program averages for June.
- We hold an annual Caregiver Support Program recognition and training event. This year we are holding it virtually on June 26<sup>th</sup>. Registration numbers have increased and there is significant interest in doing this virtually, so we may want to continue holding this virtually.

### OCS

- For childcare resources, please share ELRC contact information ([elrc5@allegHENYcounty.us](mailto:elrc5@allegHENYcounty.us) or 412-350-3577).
  - We can host childcare sessions for corporate entities. Please reach out if you are interested.
  - As a reminder, the new Allegheny Child Care tool has launched. You can search for childcare spots in your area using information such as age and address. Providers are still being listed on the site, and it will become more useful once more providers are added. <https://tryingtogether.org/find-child-care/>
- We have moved employment information and resources to [our website](#).
- Homeless network
  - Safe Haven Hotel data
    - 97 referrals have been made and 60 total households enrolled at the hotel. About 28 households are currently residing at the hotel.
    - The most common age range of clients is 50-59.
    - Most clients are at high-risk due to age or chronic health conditions.
    - Clients were referred from a diversity of sources, mostly from the homeless services program.
    - About half of clients exited to a permanent housing situation.
  - Recent Waivers Approved
    - Waiving the time limit on rental assistance on RRH projects; participants can now receive rental assistance until 3 months after state or local health official determines special measures are no longer needed to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
    - Case management waiver; virtual case management for RRH has been extended until August 31<sup>st</sup>.
    - Waivers secured under the original HUD request are still in effect:
      - Virtual tours of units are allowable, with in-person inspection happening within 6 months of lease signing.
      - Re-inspection of units can be postponed up to 6 months past original re-inspection date.
  - Upcoming Trainings
    - [Point Source Youth weekly webinars](#)
    - [NAEH Nationwide Virtual Town Hall on Ending Homelessness](#) on July 15<sup>th</sup>

- [SAMHSA Forward Together: A Virtual Symposium on Improving Access to Effective Care for People Experiencing Homelessness, Serious Mental Illness, and Substance Use Disorders](#) on June 18<sup>th</sup>
- As a reminder, Quarantine and Isolation spaces are open for individuals and families and space is available.
  - To make a referral for a family, contact Remy Harris ([Remy.Harris@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Remy.Harris@alleghenycounty.us)).
  - Homeless referrals: [Jessica.McKown@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Jessica.McKown@alleghenycounty.us)
  - Office of Behavioral Health referrals: [Diane.Johnson@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Diane.Johnson@alleghenycounty.us)
  - Allegheny County Jail referrals: [Jennifer.Batterton@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Jennifer.Batterton@alleghenycounty.us)
  - Immigrants and Internationals referrals: [bgreen@jfcspgh.org](mailto:bgreen@jfcspgh.org)
- As a reminder, client cell phones are available:
  - Contact Gabe Krivosh ([Gabriel.Krivosh@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Gabriel.Krivosh@alleghenycounty.us)) for more information.
- As a reminder, Carolyn Bebb, Tax Program Coordinator at DHS, is collecting success stories about individuals experiencing homelessness who received an economic impact payment.
  - Please connect with Carolyn at [Carolyn.Bebb@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Carolyn.Bebb@alleghenycounty.us).
- We've moved the Provider Network Meeting to every other Tuesday at 9:30 am; call-in information can be found in the slide presentation. Our next meeting is on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### Behavioral Health

- We encourage you to share the [PMHCS Virtual Warm Line](#).
- Early Intervention
  - No new updates since 6/4/2020.

#### OID/Autism

- [ODP Announcement 20-072](#): Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) At-a-Glance Reopening Guide
- Continue to follow local information and directives, along with PA Department of Health and the State Office of Developmental Programs. Links to COVID-19 updates can be found on MyODP.org at <https://www.myodp.org/mod/page/view.php?id=26808>.

#### CYF

- Today we held a virtual graduation celebration for our 89 seniors!
- Regarding parent-child visitation, we are going to move forward slowly. We are asking our casework staff to have a teaming discussion to figure out a way to safely visit and maintain precautions. Our regional offices are open for visits as a last resort. We have [guidance for providers](#) on our website and we created a video for our families sharing what to expect. Please let us know if you receive feedback.

#### Transportation

- No new updates since 5/14/2020.

### **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**