



**COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting**  
**July 16, 2020**



## General Information

We continue to hold DHS Provider Meetings once per week on Thursdays.

Please submit stories and photos of ways in which COVID-19 has changed the ways that you and your staff operate to [Evelyn.Whitehill@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:Evelyn.Whitehill@AlleghenyCounty.US).

If a member of your staff has tested positive for COVID-19, including presumptive positive, or has been exposed to a confirmed case, notify DHS by emailing [DHS-PrivacyOfficer@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHS-PrivacyOfficer@alleghenycounty.us) (preferred method). Alternatively, you may report via phone to Brian Bell, Allegheny County Privacy Officer, at 412-350-2887.

## COVID-19 Guidance Update

Tomorrow (July 17<sup>th</sup>) ACHD will announce any changes to their July 8th order, based on the Governor's order.

Current ACHD guidance (which is currently not superseded by less restrictive statewide guidance):

- Indoor dining/alcohol consumption is prohibited at bars & restaurants. (State prohibits all drinking at bars, but does allow indoor dining at 25% capacity, or no more than 25 persons.)
- Take-out and delivery OK for food/alcohol, as is outdoor dining. (Same as State guidance.)
- No more than 3 alcoholic drinks for outdoor dining. (State has no restriction.)
- Events/gatherings limited to 25 people indoors/50 people outdoors. (State has same indoor limit, but 250 person outdoor limit.)
- ACHD guidance is in effect until July 24th. (State guidance is ongoing until revoked.)

You can refer to Dr. Bogen's briefing for information on prioritizing testing, which includes:

- Priority: if someone has symptoms
- Second: if someone has had close contact with a positive case
- Third: healthcare workers and first responders

## COVID-19 Metrics

Allegheny County is not meeting the following benchmarks:

- Decline in new cases: we saw 1,173 new cases the week of 7/5
- New cases below threshold: our rate is 198 per 100,000 residents, above 50
- Decline in total hospitalizations: We get this from HACP data, they have stopped updating their data. We are working on getting new hospital data.
- Diagnostic testing capacity: Our tests to cases ratio is continuing to decline.
- Rate of transmission below 1: It has gone down to 1.1, just above the threshold.
- New cases below threshold: we are now above the PA threshold.

Allegheny County is approaching the following benchmarks:

- Percent of Positive tests: It is now 9.7% and increasing

Allegheny County is meeting the following benchmarks:

- Decline in Deaths: This is flat.
- ICU bed capacity: This is remaining pretty flat.

Shawn McGrogan, Operations Manager and Melaney Hegyes, Community Engagement Manager, United Way 2-1-1, joined the call to discuss United Way's *Check-in Calls* service.

- 2-1-1 connects people to live trained resource navigators 24/7 to address basic needs.

- 2-1-1 will now screen callers, have a partner agency follow up with them and check in periodically.
- If you are talking to a client, family member or neighbor that could benefit from this engagement, say:
  - “If you’d like, one of our community partners can call you just to check-in until we all return to our normal routines. You can contact 2-1-1 to enroll, or I’d be happy to pass along your information.”
    - If yes, write down their name, phone number, zip code and age (either 60+ or under 60). Email to [checkins@unitedwayswpa.org](mailto:checkins@unitedwayswpa.org).
- Social media announcements will start going out on 7/22/2020 to advertise the check-in program.
- The 2-1-1 slides will be posted to the Provider website, and we will post a stand-alone document with (1) the 2-1-1 call info and (2) the Check-in script that we've been given to identify those who are interested in these check-in services.

Linda Kuster, System of Care Project Director, joined the call to give an update.

DHS was recently awarded a new System of Care grant from SAMHSA, a 4-year grant to continue the BH/CYF Community of Practice.

- The CoP’s goal is to improve access, coordination and quality of mental health services for children, youth and families involved in child welfare.
- For the last year, the CoP has been running a pilot connecting CYF-involved individuals to Administrative Service Coordination.
  - Partners include CYF North Regional Office, HSAO, Pressley Ridge and Wesley Family Services.
  - Added an electronic referral to KIDS, directly from caseworker to provider.
  - The next phase of the pilot will focus on Teaming.
  - 56 referrals were submitted through the pilot, most commonly for outpatient services. See the slide presentation for an analysis of results.
- New Grant Objectives
  - Expand the Pilot to all regional offices
  - Procure one provider to implement the Family Case Management Model (scheduled for beginning of 2021).
  - Hire three new FTE roles: Cross-System Learning and Development Specialist, Cross-System Peer Coach Specialist and Mental Health Project Manager. These roles should be posted next week.
- Feel free to contact [Linda.Kuster@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Linda.Kuster@alleghenycounty.us) with any questions.

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 submit stories and photos of how COVID-19 has changed your operation and that of your staff to [Evelyn.Whitehill@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:Evelyn.Whitehill@AlleghenyCounty.US)

## Legislative/Policy Updates

### State and Local Updates

- PA's Office of Unemployment Compensation is now offering the [Extended Benefits](#) program to provide up to 13 additional weeks of benefits to people who have used up both their regular

state [unemployment compensation \(UC\)](#) and federal [Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation \(PEUC\)](#).

- Gov. Wolf signed two policing bills on Tuesday to reform officer hiring and training that were passed in the wake of statewide protests.
- Allegheny County Council on Tuesday voted against an ordinance that would have required universal coronavirus testing at all County facilities, and another that would have outlawed "less-lethal" weapons like pepper spray and bean-bag guns for use by police.
- County Council, in a unanimous vote, approved an ordinance aimed at protecting transgender people from discrimination in health care settings.

## Food

There are three [upcoming food distributions](#):

1. Natrona Heights (Farmers to Families): July 17<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm at Highlands High School
2. McKeesport (Food Bank): July 18<sup>th</sup> at 10 am at Founders Hall Middle School
3. Duquesne (Food Bank): July 20<sup>th</sup> at the Food Bank
  - a. Duquesne is requiring reservations; the benefit is that you can receive multiple boxes in one car.

## Program Updates

### OCS

- Homeless network
  - As a reminder, Governor Wolf signed a new [executive order](#) that protects homeowners and renters from eviction or foreclosure until **Aug. 31**, if they have not received assistance from the new CARES Act Rental Assistance Program or are not already receiving relief through one of several federal foreclosure moratorium programs or judicial orders.
  - [Applications](#) are now available [for PHFA's CARES Rent Relief Program](#), to provide a maximum of 6 months of rent assistance for eligible renters. In partnership with ACED, we are handling the [renter program locally](#). Please contact [Cassandra.Collinge@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Cassandra.Collinge@alleghenycounty.us) for more information.
    - Please help us get the word out!
    - ACTION Housing has a dedicated hotline to answer applicant questions: 412-248-0021, [ahicarestrp@actionhousing.org](mailto:ahicarestrp@actionhousing.org)
    - Mortgage assistance is available through the PHFA site.
  - Quarantine and Isolation spaces remain open for individuals and families and have available spaces. We are seeing more referrals coming in, please continue to go through this point of contact before submitting a referral.
    - 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)
- We have ordered more cell phones for clients who need to communicate with providers or access telehealth. Please contact Gabe Krivosh ([Gabriel.Krivosh@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Gabriel.Krivosh@alleghenycounty.us)) for additional information.
- We are getting ready to open the Winter Shelter on November 15<sup>th</sup>. We expect to have lower capacity at the usual location (Smithfield United Church of Christ) due to COVID-19 space restrictions, so we will need 1-2 additional locations.  
Contact [Cynthia.Shields@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Cynthia.Shields@alleghenycounty.us) with any space suggestions.
- As a reminder, we are still looking for a [medical/clinical director](#) at the safe haven site. Help get the word out! This position should be in place for about six months.
- 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. The next meeting on July 21<sup>st</sup> will focus on workforce development.

### **CYF**

- We are urgently looking for placements for three young men from 11-17, please contact Jacki Hoover at [Jacki.Hoover@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:Jacki.Hoover@AlleghenyCounty.US).
- We want to create a shared framework with our foster care providers and collaboratively implement new strategies to improve safety, permanency and well-being of children and families in Allegheny County.
  - We are seeking your feedback on the [Foster Care Concept Paper](#) to inform this work and an upcoming RFP.
- Allegheny County, on behalf of its Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth and Families, is seeking Proposals from qualified Proposers for a residential program for victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) using the evidence-based treatment model CHANCE. The RFP will go out next week and contracts will be in place late 2020/early 2021.

### **OID is now ODS: Office of Developmental Supports!**

- Last July, we began working with individuals with Autism. In addition, we work with Lifecourse tools to work on broader supports. We are trying to move away from being service-driven to support-focused.
- We also added a Multisystem Team, previously housed under IPS. They are key facilitators for individuals active across program offices.

### **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**