



COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting
September 10, 2020



General Information

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

Poll workers are still needed, and we encourage you to apply. To learn more and apply, visit [Poll worker application](#) and the [Become a Poll Worker](#) video.

Check out and share these voter resources:

- Allegheny County Elections Division E-newsletter: [Sign-up](#) to receive information on preparations for the November general election
- [Overview of vote by mail process in Allegheny County](#)
- [Register to vote](#)
- [Check voter registration status](#)
- [Absentee Ballot Application](#): The last day to apply for an absentee ballot for the November 3, 2020 election is October 27th. The application must be received in the Elections office by that date.
- Allegheny County is currently looking for temporary election processing assistants (primarily data processing and clerical work) at \$20/hour for various shifts. If interested, call 412-350-6109 .

The following solicitations are active on the DHS Solicitations Page:

- RFP for Inpatient Program for Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
 - Proposals **Now Due Sept 30** (amended with a new requirement; date extended from original date of 9/16)
- RFP for Latinx Community Needs Assessment
 - Proposals due September 18
- All available on [DHS Solicitations Page](#), along with a form to sign up to receive email notifications when we post new solicitations

As a reminder, the **deadline for the 2020 Census** is September 30th.

- The city and the county are undercounted compared to 2010 levels. The East End and Mon Valley are particularly undercounted right now.
- Please do whatever you can to get the word out, and let DHS know how we can help.

The County announced a [new COVID-19 Testing Site](#) in McKeesport at 455 Industry Road, opening on 9/15 at 10 am.

Molly Morrill and LaTrenda Sherrill joined the call to talk about Allegheny County's Safety and Justice Project. We have been participating in this project for the past few years and now have the opportunity to apply for additional funding to extend the project.

- We are being asked to propose a project that reduces the Jail population levels and reduces racial and ethnic disparities within the justice system.
- We are partnering with DHS, the courts, District Attorney's office, pretrial services and probation
- Our proposed strategies prevent people from getting involved in the criminal justice system and reduce the amount of time spent in jail. They include:

- Crisis Response
- Early Representation
- Pretrial Assessment
- Expedited Court Processing
- Reduce the Number and Length of Detainers
- Jail Redesign
- Community Engagement
- Racial Equity
- We want feedback from the community on these strategies,;please answer the questions on [Neighborland](#) and share the link with others. Questions include:
 - What are some ways Allegheny County can continue to reduce its jail population?
 - How should Allegheny County support community-based efforts to improve public safety?
 - If you or a family member were involved in the criminal justice system, what do you wish had happened differently?

Supply Availability

We are continuing our partnership with Global Links to get supplies to the provider network.

- We have reserved \$1M of CARES funding for another round of supply distribution. You can access these supplies at no cost, starting today (9/10) through [this form](#).
- There is a finite quantity so please only request what you need.
- DHS providers can select from a special menu of supplies including emergency facemasks, full face shield, non-contact infrared thermometers, hand sanitizer, Clorox clean-up disinfectant, and limited supplies of baby, and incontinence & personal care items.

COVID-19 Metrics

[PA has posted an early warning indicators dashboard](#). The data is updated every Friday.

- There was an increase in newly reported cases, incidence rate and resting positivity rate over the past week (August 28th-September 3rd).
- There was a 32% increase in new cases reported over the last week.
- There was a 34% increase in the incidence rate per 100,000 residents over the last week
- There was a 19% increase in positivity rate over the last week.

For more information, you can access the [Quarterly Board of Health meetings](#) and Weekly COVID-19 Press Briefings on [Facebook](#), Twitter, and YouTube channels for Allegheny County and AC Health Department.

COVID-19 Mobile Testing Schedule

As a reminder, each Monday, the Allegheny County Health Department provides an updated mobile testing schedule on its [Facebook page](#) and [Twitter](#). Testing is ongoing at sites around the County and individuals can [register here](#); some sites allow for walk-ins.

- You can use the [county testing map](#) when you are working with a client and looking for testing locations with them.

The Health Department is hosting a series of events through October to provide tools so that communities are safely prepared to respond to the overdose epidemic. See slide presentation for dates and locations of these events.

September is National Preparedness Month to promote family and community disaster planning. To learn more, visit <https://www.ready.gov/september>.

Child Passenger Safety Week is September 20-26, 2020.

- Car Seat Safety Resources: <http://pakidstravelsafe.org/car-seats>
- Find a Car Seat Loan Program: <http://pakidstravelsafe.org/resources/car-seat-loan-programs?view=Profiles&layout=search>

In-home internet access requests: DHS Staff & Providers can submit a request for a device and/or internet access on behalf of clients in need.

- Available options include a mobile hotspot (available now) or in-home internet (available in ~ 6 weeks)
- Service is guaranteed through December, and we are trying to extend this for as long as possible.
- Requests are now incorporated into the [DHS Device Request Form](#).
- Please get the word out!

We are continuing to improve our website, located at www.bit.ly/COVID19DHSProviders.

- The [Operational Changes Tracker](#) is now live.
- You can reach us by email at 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 COVID-19 has affected your operations, to Evelyn.Whitehill@AlleghenyCounty.US.

Legislative/Policy Updates

Federal Updates

- Chances for larger 5th Federal stimulus bill unlikely before October government-funding deadline.
 - A "skinny" Republican-backed stimulus bill was blocked today in the Senate.

State and Local Updates

- PA Senate Appropriations Committee on Wednesday advanced COVID-19 funding-related bills on a bipartisan basis:
 - \$150 million to assist residential and small business customers with utility payments.
 - \$200 million to create the Nonprofit Economic Emergency Delivery Systems Grants Program, a statewide competitive grant program to be run by the Commonwealth Financing Authority for eligible community-based, human service nonprofit organizations (e.g., childcare centers, domestic violence centers, food banks) impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Maximum grants will be \$500,000 per eligible nonprofit.
- PA Office of Unemployment Compensation has begun distributing the additional \$300/week through the [Lost Wages Assistance \(LWA\) Program](#).

- The additional payments are available for 6 weeks with eligibility based on unemployment (or partial unemployment) due to COVID-19, with other details and criteria available online.
- Unemployment Compensation recipients must complete a Certification to receive the additional funding and are advised to do so as soon as possible. Individuals currently receiving benefits thru the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance are automatically eligible and do not need to apply. Information on completing Certification [here](#).
- Pittsburgh's URA Board expected to approve small business rental assistance today.
 - Will provide up to \$333/month for a maximum of three months to help offset rent paid by small businesses with fewer than 30 employees in Community Development Block Grant-eligible neighborhoods.
 - The program will match any landlord rent reduction – for example, if the landlord drops the rent by \$200, URA will then give an additional \$200 to the small business.
 - URA earmarking \$40,000 for this program, with a max of \$1,000 per business.
- President Judge Clark issued a [court order](#) clarifying implementation of the [CDC order](#) to temporarily halt certain evictions nationwide (Sept 4 – Dec 31).
 - In general, the CDC order requires a tenant to submit a [CDC Declaration form](#)

Food

There are five upcoming Food Bank distributions:

1. Duquesne, 9/14, 5 pm, 1 N Linden St, [register here](#)
2. Allegheny Valley, 9/15, 5 pm, 590 Pittsburgh Mills Blvd, [register here](#)
3. McKeesport, 9/19, 10 am, 1960 Eden Park Blvd, [register here](#)
4. Wilkinsburg, 9/26, 11 am, 333 Lincoln Highway, [register here](#)
5. Duquesne, 9/28, 12 pm, 1 N Linden St, [register here](#)

The Food Bank Doorstep Delivery program is also up and running. This program is a last resort for people who have no other means to access food.

- Individuals in need of home delivery food assistance should call the Food Bank at 412-460-3663 ext. 655. The Food Bank's COVID-19 concierge team is fielding calls from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Program Updates

OCS

- Allegheny County's Community Learning Hubs will serve as places for children to engage in virtual learning and participate in enrichment activities.
 - More hubs opened this week. We are so proud of our partners for making this happen!
 - Please send families to the [Trying Together website](#) for information.
 - There is still space available at many hubs!
- We are using CSBG Supplemental funds to provide one-time emergency assistance for individuals and families throughout the County (except for the City of Pittsburgh). Participating agencies include:

- Allegheny Valley Association of Churches, contact Beth Kendra at beth@avac.org
- Human Services Center Corporation, Anna Hudson ahudson@hsc-mvpc.org
- North Hills Community Outreach, contact Stephanie Kobert, sdkobert@nhco.org
- South Hills Interfaith Movement, contact Elizabeth Henninger, ehenninger@shimcares.org
- Housing
 - We are following the Health Department guidance, which recommends quarantining individuals for two weeks who have arrived from a high-risk state (see slide presentation for a full list of states). Please reach out to your Safe Haven contact if you are lacking space for someone to quarantine.
 - The Census will be targeting people experiencing homelessness September 22-24.
 - Enumerators will be wearing bright orange vests and approaching people at locations within the community including shelters, soup kitchens and, possibly camps (if locations are known).
 - Please let clients know that this will be occurring.
 - The next Homeless Network provider call is on 9/15 at 9:30 am, focused on peer support and psychological rehabilitation services; please see slides for access information.
 - Also, “Ask a (Housing) Navigator! Office Hours” are being held every Tuesday from 10:30-11:00 am; please see slides for access information.
 - Housing navigation-focused provider trainings will begin in September, and landlord trainings are in the works.

OBH

- PA has launched Team Pennsylvania, a free crisis counseling program, available at 1-855-284-2494 or 724-631-5600. Please share with clients.
- Today is world suicide prevention day. You are invited to safely light a candle in your window this evening at 8 pm to remember a loved one or show support.
- The 5th Annual Pittsburgh Recovery Walk will occur semi-virtually on September 19th. Register here: <https://pghrecoverywalk.org/>
- Out of the Darkness Pittsburgh Virtual Walk is being sponsored by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention on 10/4. Visit <https://afsp.org/pittsburgh> to learn more.
- NAMI Walks will occur on October 10, 2020. Visit <https://www.namikeystonepa.org/nami-events/namiwalks/> to learn more.

CYF

- September is Child Welfare Workforce Development Month.
 - September 14-18 is Worker Appreciation Week. You’re invited to join the one-hour virtual recognition event on September 15 at 3 pm ET. Register to attend at www.NCWWI.org/CWorkforce.
 - We will also locally host daily virtual trainings, lunch events and activities focused on equity.
 - We are also working to address burnout, which is prevalent in our workforce.

A Closing Announcement from DHS Director Marc Cherna

Karen Blumen and Latika Davis-Jones will have their last day at DHS on Friday, September 11th. We are sorry to see them go and we wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors.

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 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