



COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting

September 17, 2020



General Information

As a reminder, DHS Provider Meetings are held each Thursday.

Allegheny County has announced that they have sufficient poll workers. They are still 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 Child Sex Trafficking
 - Proposals Now Due 10/14 (amended; date extended from original date of 9/16)
- RFP for Latinx Community Needs Assessment
 - Proposals due September 18 – tomorrow!
- All are available on [DHS Solicitations Page](#), along with 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 still undercounted compared to 2010 levels, particularly in the East End and Mon Valley.
- Please do whatever you can to get the word out, and let DHS know how we can help.

Dr. Debra Bogen, Director of the Allegheny County Health Department, joined the call to talk about the Health Department's response.

- Overall, our County is doing remarkably well given that our college students are back and schools are open in some capacity. People are largely wearing masks. The restrictions are working well. We need to keep rates low so that kids can stay in school.
- People who go to restaurants and bars are 2-3 times more likely to have a positive COVID-19 test. On the other hand, we are not seeing too many cases in stores or salons. Travel has declined a lot because people are back to school and back to work.
- The McKeesport test site can process up to 250 samples a day. It's by appointment and it's a drive-through site. So far it has not been filled to capacity. Please spread the word that there are available appointments.
- There have been a few Narcan events already; they are also distributing masks.
- School administrators and nurses have an email address to report any positive cases at school; the epidemiologists' response time is less than an hour. The case investigator calls to get details about the case and has been able to do individualized care. The 2-1-1 Nurse Hotline provides general guidance, not specific case guidance.
- If you test positive, you must isolate for ten days from the onset of symptoms. If you are asymptomatic, it is 10 days from the day of the test. If you have a chronic illness or are immunocompromised, isolation should be for 20 days. Close contacts, like household members, must isolate for 14 days from last exposure, because symptoms can develop anytime during those 14 days. Use the clinical guidance from the CDC to decide when to end isolation, not negative tests.
- There are some vaccine trials in Pittsburgh and one has almost completed enrollment, but there will likely not be community availability until the spring of next year.
- ACHD guidance is that if you travel out of state, wear your mask and maintain social distance. If you were unable to social distance, you should quarantine.
- Turnaround time for test results is fairly quick. Commercial lab tests take about 48 to 72 hours; ER tests are faster. The County lab has results within 24-36 hours.

- Mask wearing is only effective if worn properly—tightly fitted around the nose and under the chin.
- When hiring new employees, you do not need to screen them for COVID-19. You just need to educate them about proper mask wearing, hand washing and social distancing.

Using AccessMyInfo, DHS clients (and/or the family members that care for them) can:

- View and better understand the information collected about them
- Better track and coordinate their own treatment and care.
- Suggest corrections to certain information

Clients can now gain access to their records in 3 ways:

- Follow directions associated with some of the correspondence DHS sends when engaging with clients. These directions are currently sent with:
 - Accept-for-Service letter from the KIDS system
 - Closing Letter from the KIDS system
 - Common Assessment Tool ANSA summary report
 - Self Sufficiency ANSA report
- Contact the Director's Action Line for access (800.862.6783 or DAL@alleghenycounty.us)
- DHS or Provider staff can generate an access code for clients so that they can create an account and view their records.

Update on CARES (CRF) Spending

- We are monitoring carefully to see how much is being spent. We have \$38.3M to spend. We've contracted for \$31M and have paid out \$6M.
- You can help by executing your contracts as soon as possible and submitting invoices in a timely fashion. Please reach out to Kathy Heinz or Dan Evancho if you need help.

COVID-19 Mobile Testing Schedule

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 to find testing locations.

We are continuing to improve our website, located at www.bit.ly/COVID19DHSPublications.

- 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 submit stories and photos of your response to the pandemic to Evelyn.Whitehill@AlleghenyCounty.US

Legislative/Policy Updates

Federal Updates

- Some new life in 5th COVID-19 stimulus bill talks as the 50-member bipartisan House Problem Solvers Caucus released a \$1.5t proposal.

- Unclear whether Senate Republicans will cut a deal with the House for a bill larger than the \$500b bill that they proposed and that was ultimately defeated last week.

State and Local Updates

- Federal District Court judge ruled that parts of Governor Wolf's COVID-19 shutdown efforts were unconstitutional earlier this week.
 - Invalidates parts of Gov. Wolf's early pandemic response, including stay-at-home orders and business closures deemed "non-life-sustaining." Wolf has since eased many of the restrictions.
 - Invalidates current state mandated size limits on indoor and outdoor gatherings, saying they violate citizens' constitutional right to assemble (no more than 25 people indoors/no more than 250 people outside).
 - Gov. Wolf and Attorney General Josh Shapiro are requesting a stay of the order and filing an appeal, especially requesting that the outdoor and indoor limits stand, as overturning them would cause confusion and endanger lives.
 - Allegheny County Health Department's indoor/outdoor limits are also threatened by this ruling (but are currently not impacted).
- Full PA Senate to consider COVID-19 funding-related bills next week.
 - Bills that have advanced to the floor of the Senate out of Committee so far include the \$150 million to assist residential and small business customers with utility payments, and the \$200 million to create the Nonprofit Economic Emergency Delivery Systems Grants Program.
 - These bills must also pass the House before they can be signed by the Governor into law.
- PA Office of Unemployment Compensation encourages application as soon as possible for the additional \$300/week through the [Lost Wages Assistance \(LWA\) Program](#) as funds will run out quickly.
 - Individuals currently receiving benefits thru the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance are automatically eligible and do not need to apply. Information on completing Certification [here](#).
 - Regular unemployment payments continue as usual, though the State is now borrowing from the Federal government in order to make payments as appropriated state funds are depleted.
- 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 found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-eviction-declaration.html>.

Food

There are three upcoming Food Bank distributions:

1. McKeesport, 9/19, 10 am, 1360 Eden Park Blvd
2. Wilkinsburg, 9/26, 11 am, 333 Lincoln Highway
3. Duquesne, 9/28, 12 pm, 1 N. Linden St

Program Updates

OCS

- Housing
 - We are following the Health Department guidance, which recommends quarantining individuals who have arrived from a high-risk state for two weeks (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.
 - Continue use of PPE and Physical Distancing.
 - Changes to monitoring
 - We will do all of our BHS monitoring virtually this year. We will be assessing risk levels to determine what level of monitoring you need.
 - 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.
 - Our field unit will accompany some teams, but some may go out on their own.
 - Please let clients know that this will be occurring.
 - The next Homeless network provider call is on 9/29 at 9:30 am.
 - 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

- If you are in crisis or are experiencing difficult or suicidal thoughts, call:
 - Allegheny County Crisis Response Team (resolve): 1-(888) 796-8226
 - PA Crisis Line: 1-855-284-2494
 - National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273 TALK (8255)
 - If you’re uncomfortable talking on the phone, you can also text NAMI to 741-741 to be connected to a free, trained crisis counselor on the Crisis Text Line.
 - If you or someone you know is in a life-threatening emergency, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- September is Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month. Learn the warning signs at nami.org/suicideprevention
- 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 10th, 2020. Visit <https://www.namikeystonepa.org/nami-events/namiwalks/> to learn more.

CYF

- As a reminder, 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/CWworkforce.
- 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.

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. 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