



COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting
November 5, 2020



General Information

DHS Provider Meetings are held once per week on Thursdays.

The following solicitations are active on the DHS Solicitations Page:

- RFP for Additional Rapid Re-Housing Units for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) - Responses due Tuesday, November 24
 - Non-mandatory pre-proposal conference via Teams on Tuesday, November 10 (details in RFP)
- Available on [DHS Solicitations Page](#), along with form to sign up to receive email notifications when we post new solicitations

Dr. Debra Bogen, Director of the Allegheny County Health Department, joined the call to discuss rising COVID cases.

- We are seeing about 200 cases per day, and there is no one major source of cases. Many don't know where they were exposed (community spread), and many others were exposed at gatherings with asymptomatic people. Please limit your activities to essential places and use your best judgement in regard to small social gatherings.
 - The percentage of cases associated with schools are rising. The majority of these are spread at social gatherings related to school, not in the classroom. Last week about 11% of cases in the county were associated with schools.
 - We are seeing more cases among K-12 staff than we would expect.
 - We have not had a huge outbreak at local universities - about 700 cases among students and 38 among staff.
 - Last week there were 800 cases. We are not seeing exponential growth, but we are seeing a steady rise.
 - Other counties in PA are experiencing increases in cases.
 - We are at 4.1% positivity rate.
 - We only calculate positivity rate from PCR tests. We rely on the [PA DOH Early Warning Monitoring System Dashboard](#). This data is a week behind, which is important due to delays in reporting. The state also calculates based on the number of individuals tested, not the number of tests.
 - There are ongoing racial disparities. The Black community has been much more affected. The Black population represents 13% of our population but 19% of cases and 30% of hospitalizations.
- Testing
 - We are seeing an uptick in antigen testing, but PCR tests remain the gold standard.
 - Testing is available through the AHN Mobile Van, Squirrel Hill Health Center, Metro Family Health, EMS – city and others, faith-based organizations and the [McKeesport Drive through test site](#). You do not need insurance or a prescription. Over 2,000 tests have been administered at the McKeesport site.
 - Our federal qualified health centers have done over 25,000 tests. About 50% of people tested were non-white.
 - On a weekly basis, 30-60% of people test asymptomatic positive.
 - The ACHD website is up to date with testing events.
- Flu season
 - Flu season is here! ACHD has updated the [influenza website](#) with a [flu vaccine site map](#), a form to post your flu event, and a form to request a flu event for your organization. ACHD has also hired a flu coordinator through a CDC REACH grant.
- WIC

- Moving to a new downtown WIC office (to 332 Fifth Ave) with a waiting room designed by the Children's Museum.
- Outdoor behavior
 - Wear a mask outdoors if it is a crowded area and always social distance.
- Indoor behavior and Thanksgiving
 - It depends on the size of your space, the ventilation, and the precautions/risks that other guests have been taking. If you are walking around, people should have their masks on. If you want to eat together, sit at least 6 feet apart and remain seated while eating.
- Reinfection
 - The symptoms can linger for a long time.
 - The CDC recommends not re-testing people until 3 months after infection. Reinfection is possible after a few months.

Consider downloading the COVID Alert PA app. It can alert you if you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive.

Scott Hemphill joined the call to discuss digital divide efforts.

- We have 3 sites up and running, and 8 sites coming soon, for a total of 11. Grist Mill comes online tomorrow. We have signage coming to all locations to instruct people how to access.
- We also were able to put together a community Wi-Fi map: wifi.alleghenycounty.us. This map includes libraries, universities and other publicly available sites.
- Device Requests: We have distributed over 1,000 laptops and 348 hotspots. If you have clients who need devices, get your requests in for our final push this year. We also have headsets; please email us to request one: dhs-covid19supplies@alleghenycounty.us
- As a reminder, we encourage you to [place your order for free supplies!](#) Consider your needs through the remainder of the year. We have emergency facemasks, full-face shields, non-contact infrared thermometers (limit 2 per order), hand sanitizer (8 oz and 64 oz options) and Clorox clean-up disinfectant
- Using CARES funds, we are mailing masks out to over 23,000 households (>94,000 masks) with informational cards from United Way. We have also distributed 118,250 masks to agencies offering in-person services to distribute to their clients. See the slide presentation for a list of agencies.

Allegheny County Election Review

- We saw slightly higher turnout this year. A slight majority voted on election day voted in-person rather than mail-in or absentee.
- You can look at detailed outcomes and voter turnout at the [elections website](#). For President, Biden/Harris won the city, most of the eastern suburbs, portions of the South Hill, and parts of the North Hills and Mon Valley. Trump/Pence won the northeastern, southeastern and western portions of the county
- Biden/Harris carried the absentee vote (63%), but Trump/Pence carried election day (78%).
- Vote totals are not final as ballots are still being counted both in Allegheny County (35,000+ remain) as well as across the state (8% of votes still outstanding).
- The Home Rule Charter amendment was overwhelmingly approved with 78.1% of the vote.

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 submit stories and photos of how you are meeting needs during this time to Evelyn.Whitehill@AlleghenyCounty.US

Legislative/Policy Updates

State and Local Updates

- Last week, Pennsylvania's Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) announced a much rosier state revenue picture than forecasted in June due to higher-than-expected consumer spending as a result of federal stimulus programs (e.g., unemployment compensation).
 - However, there's still an approximate \$2b budget hole for this fiscal year.
 - IFO highlighted how rental debt and job losses will be lingering problems for Pennsylvanians, which dampens the longer-term state budget outlook without additional federal stimulus.
- The General Assembly has finished its regular legislative session without allocating the remaining \$1.3b in federal CARES Act funds. The allocation will be part of budget negotiations that must be figured out by the end of November for the rest of the current fiscal year and is expected to help fill the revenue shortfall.
- Last week, Governor Wolf signed Act 83, an expansion of PA's Clean Slate law, removing an obligation to pay any outstanding court-ordered financial obligations before eligible cases can be sealed.
 - The bill also requires that a record is automatically sealed when a pardon is granted; if there's a not-guilty verdict, the record is then expunged.
- City of Pittsburgh overwhelmingly passed an amendment to their home rule charter, increasing the powers of the Citizen Police Review Board (CPRB).
 - Pittsburgh police officers can be terminated if they do not cooperate with a CPRB investigation.

Food

Upcoming food distributions:

1. Wilkesburg, 11/7, 11am, 225 Penn Ave [Register here](#)
2. Duquesne, 11/9, 3pm, 1 N Linden St [Register here](#)
3. Allegheny Valley, 11/10, 4pm, 590 Pittsburgh Mills Blvd [Register here](#)
4. Duquesne, 11/23, 12pm, 1 N Linden St [Register here](#)

Program Updates

OCS

Housing and Homelessness system update

- New applications are no longer being accepted for the rent relief program. CRRP applications submitted on or before 11/4 should be reviewed and applicants contacted by next week. Applicants with incomplete applications can still submit documentation if their application was submitted on/before 11/4.

- For rental assistance needs not addressed through CRRP, people should contact the Allegheny Link to be screened for and referred to other programs they may be eligible for: 866-730-2368
- The Safe Haven is now hiring for the following positions:
 - Community Support Specialist :
<https://communityhumanservices.applytojob.com/apply/zAwLztODOa/Hotel-Shelter-Community-Support-Specialist>
 - This position currently pays incentive pay and is starting at \$21 per hour. Full and Part Time considered.
 - Team Lead :
<https://communityhumanservices.applytojob.com/apply/BMkMdpDzts/Hotel-Shelter-Lead-Community-Support-Specialist>
 - This position is eligible to receive incentive pay, making its pay range \$22 - \$26 per hour.
 - Clinical Operations Consultant (to organize medical aspects, policies and procedures):
<https://communityhumanservices.applytojob.com/apply/eSjNe80QFw/Clinical-Operations-Consultant>
 - Social Worker :
<https://communityhumanservices.applytojob.com/apply/OVMLEbnPjg/Social-Worker-MSWLSW>

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