



**COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting**  
**December 10, 2020**



## General Information

As a reminder, DHS Provider Meetings are held once per week on Thursdays. There will be no meetings on Thursday 12/24 or Thursday 12/31<sup>st</sup>.

### COVID-19 Mobile Testing Schedule

The Allegheny County Health Department continues to provide an updated mobile testing schedule every Monday 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.

- Upcoming sites:
  - Friday, Dec. 11, 9 am-noon, City of Clairton, [Pre-register here](#)
  - Friday, Dec 11, 1-4 pm, St. Paul AME Church, [Pre-register here](#)
- You can use the [county testing map](#) when you are working with a client and looking for testing locations with them.
- The McKeesport Testing Site remains open.
  - Make an appointment for a free test. You do not need insurance. Registration and testing information available at [bit.ly/McKeesportCOVIDTestSite](https://bit.ly/McKeesportCOVIDTestSite)

We are still asking for your help with CRF Billing:

- CRF must be spent by 12/30/20
- Please submit November invoices ASAP if you have not already
- Due date for December invoices will likely be 1/5/21

Reminder: you are invited to join our Community Conversations to inform a campaign to support the ethnic and minority communities. Registration: <https://www.meeproductions.com/AlleghenyCounty/>

- Dec. 11 at 1 pm
- Dec. 16 at 3 pm
- Dec. 16 at 3:30 pm

Final Call for Laptop and headset requests:

- Supply of Laptops is limited—there are fewer than 50 remaining! This is a FINAL CALL for device requests!
  - [Device Request Form](#)
- We still have plenty of headsets in stock! If you need a headset, please email us.
  - [dhs-covid19supplies@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:dhs-covid19supplies@alleghenycounty.us)

Public Wi-Fi is live at 9 sites! Find the sites at [wifi.alleghenycounty.us](http://wifi.alleghenycounty.us).

December 2020 Provider Guidance updates have been issued based on PA's November 2020 [Mitigation and Enforcement order](#), the November 2020 updates to [PA DOH's Mask Order](#) and ACHD's updated [Isolation and Quarantine](#) guidance. We will update the guidance based on today's new restrictions.

All [PA State metrics](#) have increased considerably in Allegheny County except for ER visits for COVID-19-like illnesses, which remains flat.

- The 27% positivity rate is the highest yet.

- ICU bed usage remains stable.
- Deaths have declined after a few weeks of higher numbers.
- The R value projected to dip below 1, which is good.
- See the slide presentation for more information and visualizations.

DHS's CRF funding COVID-19 [plan](#) is designed to reduce virus spread, increase safe access to services and meet basic needs. As of the end of the November, the following has been accomplished:

- Quarantine & Isolation
  - Safe Haven— 211 people
    - Accepts referrals from shelters, hospitals, first responders, and more
  - Family quarantine—9 families (12 adults and their 22 children)
  - Teen healing center—12 youth
- Shelter
  - Added 17 telehealth stations to shelters and SROs
  - Connected every shelter connected to local FQHC and in-house flu shots
  - Invested in renovations at Goodwill's Pleasant Valley Shelter, which served 118 people during the pandemic
  - Deployed 300 tablets so clients could access telehealth and teleservices, and children could connect to online learning.
- Rental Assistance (in partnership with ACED)
  - \$7.6M total distributed
  - 1,320 households
- Benefits enrollment
  - More than 1,543 people assisted (data still being collected)
- Food Access: The entire community came together to get food to people who need it.
  - Food Bank delivered 25 million+ pounds of food. Thank you to food pantry workers who have been on the frontline distributing the food.
  - United Way provided 700,913 meals through the Students and Families Food Relief Fund in partnership with Eat n Park, Community Kitchen, OASIS Project and others.
  - United Way's Food Transportation Network has delivered over 300,000 meals using bus routes and other strategies with partners that include ACCESS transportation, CMU, A Second Chance, Inc. and others.
  - Home delivery is still available through United Way, 412 Food Rescue and Food Bank
- Devices and Wi-Fi for clients
  - 1,200 laptops and devices
  - 400 wi-fi hot spots
  - 9 community hot spots
  - Top four reasons for device requests: telehealth (57%), teletherapy (52%), caseworker visits (47%) and school (39%).
  - 95% of all laptop recipients are current DHS clients.
- Learning hubs
  - 64 hubs served 1,290 children in 10 school districts
  - 66% of students were in elementary school

- On top of Wi-Fi and instructional support, the hubs provide breakfast and lunch for kids everyday through partnerships with school districts and the United Way.
- Learning kits
  - Robust learning kits were sent to 280 preschool age children who lost access to the childcare subsidy during COVID-19, to ensure they could continue learning at home.
- Expanding use of telehealth
  - Approximately 30% of behavioral health services have been delivered via telehealth.
- Grants awarded and managed by The Pittsburgh Foundation
  - \$1.6M to 28 organizations
  - Average grant: \$58,000
  - Grants were made to organizations that are Black, Brown, Latinx and/or immigrant/refugee-led or -serving.
  - These organizations provided:
    - Food to families, meals to older adults
    - Virtual mental health services
    - Virtual job training
    - “Ask a Black doctor” online program
- Reaching Seniors at Home
  - Meals: 460,885 meals to 6,718 seniors
  - Kits: 9,100 care kits to seniors: masks and personal care items, and info inserts from United Way and AAA
- Sanitation and PPE
  - Sanitizing
    - Bactronix: 90 agency locations
    - Including behavioral health, childcare and residential services provider locations
    - ServiceMaster cleaning: 15 agencies (38,000 sq ft)
    - Hygiene stations at three homeless encampments
  - PPE/Supplies
    - 60,000 pairs of gloves and 110 infrared thermometers
    - 7,500 full face shields
    - Hand sanitizer, tissues, toothpaste & toothbrushes, baby wipes, adult incontinence products and gowns
  - Masks
    - 24,000 cloth masks mailed to households
    - 188,000 cloth or surgical masks and 13,000 N95 masks distributed to providers through Global Links
- Resource Families and Hazard Pay
  - Resource families: \$1.1M in stipends to ~1,400 resource families in the County to help with additional COVID-19-related costs
  - Hazard Pay for frontline staff: \$511,904 to 18 child welfare providers (including congregate, foster and kinship care providers)
- Other Information on Provider Contracts
  - 33% (39/118) of providers contracted for DHS’s pandemic response (via CRF) identify as Black, Latinx or Hispanic-led

- DHS adapted provider contracts to increase financial stability and enable program flexibility, where needed and possible. For example:
  - 28 out-of-school-time providers were converted from Fee-for-Service to Program Funded. This prevented revenue loss and enabled adaptation of services to include virtual programming, food access and wellness checks.
  - 54 Adult Day Care and Community Participation Supports facilities were converted from Fee-for-Service to Program Funded to ensure stability.
  - 9 Student Assistance Program providers switched from fee-for-service to program-funded, which allowed flexibility to holistically support families and school districts and to educate teachers about identifying students struggling with mental health/substance use in an online/hybrid environment.
  - 238 Behavioral Health providers participated in alternative payment arrangements:
    - Ambulatory: \$34.8 million+
    - Inpatient mental health: \$1.8 million+
    - Substance use disorder treatment: \$5.4 million+
    - Residential Treatment Facilities: \$400,000+
  - 14 County-funded MH residential and Recovery Housing providers used ~\$2.5M in HealthChoices Reinvestment funds for pandemic response, including PPE, cleaning and staff overtime.
  - An additional \$542,000+ was used to support the pandemic response at adult Residential Treatment Facilities, Long Term Structured Residences and Extended Acute Care facilities..
  - All drug & alcohol cost reimbursements (fee-for-service) rates were increased by 20% from March 1 through June 30 (exception of recovery housing).
- Continuing the Work
  - Federal Coronavirus Relief Funding is expiring on December 30<sup>th</sup>.
    - CRF supported the vast majority of DHS's COVID-19 response (\$38M)
  - But the pandemic isn't over – it's worsening
    - Hospitalizations are double what they were this past spring.
  - DHS is taking a fresh look at where community needs stand now.
    - Looking at what is most essential to continue (like quarantine & isolation facilities) and at what we should do but haven't yet (HEPA filters?)
  - What we think needs to continue:
    - Quarantine & Isolation = \$3.6M
    - Community Learning Hubs = \$3M
    - Resource Family Supports = \$1.8M
    - Client technology access = \$600K
    - Rental assistance = ~\$2M per week
  - DHS is inviting input from providers
    - Email [DHS-Ideas@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:DHS-Ideas@AlleghenyCounty.US) with your thoughts about what needs to continue or be developed.
  - Potential funding sources are being examined to support this work:
    - DHS's traditional sources

- CARES funding that remains
  - Philanthropic funds
- We are updating the plan, finding the money, and educating ourselves and elected officials on funding and restrictions that impact our ability to do this work.

#### Communication Protocol for COVID-19 Cases:

- In a single email to the following three individuals, the program administrator is to immediately notify the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (ACDHS) and the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) that an individual being served in the program is presumed or has tested positive for COVID-19:
  - [LuAnn.brink@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:LuAnn.brink@alleghenycounty.us)
  - Brian Bell, DHS's Privacy Officer, [DHSPrivacyOfficer@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHSPrivacyOfficer@alleghenycounty.us)
  - Your DHS program office contact

### Legislative/Policy Updates

#### Federal Updates

- No agreement yet on a federal stimulus, but there's still hope.
  - Congress is working to extend government-wide funding for one week by tomorrow (Friday, Dec 11<sup>th</sup>) with hopes that the extra time enables them to finalize a stimulus bill, that must pass by 12/18/2020, that will provide government-wide funding through the end of September.
- On Friday, December 5th, a federal judge ordered the Trump administration to fully restore the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program from the Obama-era designed to shield young, undocumented immigrants from deportation. Under this order, as many as 300,000 new applicants could now be eligible to apply for this special protection.

#### State and Local Updates

- The state announced new COVID-19 restrictions today.
  - We are continuing to update guidance for providers.
  - [Gov. Wolf Limited-Time Mitigation Order](#)
  - [Sec. Levine Limited-Time Mitigation Order](#)
- Allegheny County Council will consider a bill next month that would establish an independent police review board.
  - The bill was voted out of committee on Tuesday – full vote expected on Jan 26<sup>th</sup>.
  - The 9-member police review board would have the power to investigate complaints of officer misconduct. Only the Allegheny County Police Department would be required to participate, although municipal forces and the county sheriff's office could opt-in.
- City Council approved paid sick leave for COVID-19-related absences.
  - Pittsburgh businesses with more than 50 employees will be required to provide paid sick leave to workers who contract COVID-19 or who are required to quarantine because of exposure during the pandemic.

- The COVID-19-related leave requirements will expire a week after the city's pandemic emergency expires.

## **Program Updates**

### OCS

#### Childcare

- Childcare providers are remaining open whenever possible. Our understanding is that the new state restrictions do not apply to childcare centers. Specifically, according to the order, the changes in capacity do not apply to schools, childcare and churches.
- There are rolling temporary closures related to COVID-19 across the county (and state and country)
- According to the Health Department, to date there have been 174 total cases associated with childcare facilities (57 children, 117 staff).
- While there have been positive cases, there is no evidence of outbreaks.
- Current numbers:
  - We are seeing a few cases at many centers, not large outbreaks.
  - 8013 were children receiving childcare subsidy as of 11/30.
  - 37 children on childcare subsidy wait list -- *Expect to clear wait list by end of week!!!!*
  - ~1400 children enrolled in learning hubs
    - Enrollment dipped in recent weeks with surge (~800 last week vs ~1000 in prior weeks)

#### Housing and Homelessness system update

- Providers are still operating at this time.
- There have been very few incidents of COVID-19; about 50 incidents across all programs, including clients and staff.
- Spending is on track. Since 7/1, over \$8M HUD funds has been expended to continue uninterrupted RRH/PSH programs.
- Additional funding was secured for telehealth carts, 3 Winter Shelters, 2 warming centers and meals.
- Rental assistance is critical. We are rapping up the rental assistance program and are committed to helping address future evictions in 2021.
- Safe Haven
  - Most clients are there because they are high-risk.
  - Is now serving as an overflow site for winter shelters.
  - Has been receiving many referrals from the homeless system and health care.
- Winter Shelter
  - Opened on November 15<sup>th</sup>
  - At about 78% capacity for the year-round shelter. We are seeing a steady increase in clients at the Winter Shelters and we expect this to continue.

### OBH

- No services are closed at this time. A more detailed health of the network update will be provided next week.
- PA OMHSAS invites you to attend one of several stakeholder focus groups and provide your thoughts on behavioral health care in Pennsylvania

- [Stakeholder Group 1](#): Adult members and their natural supports and/or family members: January 4<sup>th</sup> 12:30 pm-2:00 pm
- [Stakeholder Group 2](#): Children and youth, young adults 18 through 21 and their family or other preferred support people: January 4<sup>th</sup> 2:30 pm-4:00 pm
- Please see the slide presentation for a list of Allegheny County, state and national behavioral health resources. We encourage you to keep these handy and share them.
- Early Intervention services are open and accepting referrals. The Alliance also developed and posted several targeted videos on their [website](#) and social media pages that focus on specific concerns that a caregiver may have and that encourage them to seek out services.

### CYF

- You are invited to become an emergency respite caregiver through A Second Chance. Email [ASCICovidCombat@asecondchance-kinship.com](mailto:ASCICovidCombat@asecondchance-kinship.com) or call Tara Skibiel at 412-715-9242.
- [My Best Self Selfie Contest](#) is an engagement opportunity for youth. Thanks to Auberle for sharing.
- This year we created a virtual version of our We Rock youth performance event, Thursday December 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm on Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88593637367>

### 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-19 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**