



COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting
January 28, 2021



General Information

As a reminder, DHS Provider Meetings are held once per week on Thursday at 4:30 pm.

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 helping a client find testing locations.
- 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
 - Individuals who are unable to drive can contact the COVID-19 hotline at 1-888-856-2774 for additional options and resources.

DHS has [released two solicitations](#):

- RFP for Family-Centered Service Coordination for Families Involved with Child Welfare and Mental Health Services
 - Proposals due Tuesday, February 9
- RFP for Foster Care Agencies
 - Proposals due Wednesday, February 10

Lynne Ventress, Program Officer at the RK Mellon Foundation, joined the call to discuss funding opportunities.

- RK Mellon launched a new ten-year funding strategy, which you can learn more about here: [2021-2030 strategy](#)
- The foundation has opened up several RFIs and RFPs to meet immediate needs:
 - Request for Proposals
 - [Economic Mobility, Supportive Living Environments for Children and Youth](#): Applicants should [submit proposals via the online proposal application](#) by February 25, 11:59 pm. Funding decisions will be announced by April 13, 2021.
 - Requests for Ideas
 - [Career Readiness for all Ages](#): Applicants should [submit ideas via the online RFI portal](#) by February 26.
 - [Employment Opportunities in the Innovation Economy](#): Applicants should [submit ideas via the online RFI portal](#) by February 26.
 - [Healthy People and Communities](#): Applicants should [submit ideas via the online RFI portal](#) by February 26.
 - Organizations can apply for funding at any time using the Richard King Mellon Foundation's [online application](#). You can also call or email at rkmf@rkmf.org.

Jenn Batterton, Manager of Special Initiatives at DHS, joined the call to discuss improving crisis prevention and response and ask for feedback.

- We are looking closely at the overreliance on law enforcement and the jail (as well as emergency rooms, homelessness systems) to respond to folks with behavioral health needs. Nearly half of people with mental illness will be arrested at some point in their life.
 - We are also focusing on reducing racial disparities in the system.
- In September 2020, the County convened a diverse group of stakeholders (from 9-1-1, law enforcement, elected officials, foundations, behavioral health providers, community members and others) to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve Allegheny County’s response to behavioral health crises, broadly defined.
 - The group worked together to develop a vision for an improved crisis response system
 - We also did a set of listening sessions with frontline staff and law enforcement from across the county.
- The group developed a set of 16 recommendations. We want to hear from you: your thoughtful feedback, suggestions and concerns are a critical part of this process.
 - We’re asking you to take a survey where you’ll have the opportunity to leave feedback on individual recommendations and select those you feel should be prioritized by the County and its partners. For additional information and to take the survey, please visit [this website](#).
 - A subset of these recommendations will be finalized and put into an action plan for the County and partners to implement.

All [PA State metrics](#) are down from last week in Allegheny County, except for emergency department visits for covid-like illnesses.

- Hospitalizations and case rates are at pre-Thanksgiving numbers.

Legislative/Policy Updates

Federal Updates

There were many important executive orders and memoranda issued affecting the following areas (see the slide presentation for details and links):

- Extending the Eviction Moratorium: CDC has extended the current order until “at least March 31, 2021.”
- Pausing Federal Student Loan Payments
- Increasing Pandemic Economic Relief and Food Assistance
- Promoting Racial Equity
- Ending the Use of Private Prisons
- Upholding DACA
- Modernizing Regulatory Review
- Promoting Scientific Integrity and Evidence-Based Policymaking

State and Local Updates

- PA DHS released a Racial Equity report last week detailing the ways in which systemic racism has led to disproportionate representation of people of color in its programs and affected the administration of programs. The report discusses health disparities and looks at economic justice,

food security, juvenile justice, early childhood education and child welfare through a racial equity lens. Next steps for PADHS include:

- A continued coordinated, department-wide effort to analyze data from physical health, behavioral health, long-term services and supports, and programs serving people with intellectual disabilities and autism to identify gaps, opportunities and trends by race
- In childcare, a focus on improving the quality of non-certified legally operating relative settings through parent engagement, enhanced parent and relative provider orientation, creation of an early learning tool kit, and targeted training for relative providers and certified STAR 1 and 2 providers.
- The full report can be found [here](#) and a summary [here](#).
- Governor Wolf will give his budget address next Tuesday (Feb 2nd), providing an update on the state of the Commonwealth and his budget plan for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.
- The address will kick-off budget hearings to finish the state's budget by June 30th.
- House Dems announced a "Safe at Home" package of bills to help renters, homeowners in debt and small "mom and pop" landlords, citing over 1 million renters and homeowners who are struggling to keep up with payments.
- Yesterday, the State Senate approved legislation (SB 109) which provides \$912m in COVID-19 relief, including \$570m to be distributed to all 67 counties for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, covering rent and utilities. The House is expected to pass the legislation early next week.
- Pittsburgh City Council is considering a large investment in affordable housing construction.
 - Conversations are occurring between City Council and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) about a \$60 million bond to jumpstart affordable housing construction in the City.
 - Biggest sticking point is who will take the debt: the City or the URA.

Vaccine Update and Tracking

- According to the [state's dashboard](#), 50,225 partial vaccines and 16,634 full vaccinations have been administered. About 6% of Allegheny County's population has received one shot.
- Vaccine provider locations: PA Dept of Health released [this map](#) where people who fall in 1A can receive the vaccine
- Vaccine timeline so far
 - The County began receiving doses the week of January 4th.
 - January 8-19th: The state and federal governments began expanding the 1A priority population to include older adults (65+) and people with underlying conditions (16-64). In Allegheny County, this is more than 1/3 of the population.
 - DHS hosted closed PODs (Points of Distribution) for Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services frontline workers. 764 people were vaccinated over 2 days.
- What's next
 - DHS will continue running closed PODs (Points of Distribution). Next week, there will be a POD for residential providers and residents served by the Office of Developmental Supports.

- Monroeville clinic open to 65+, and DHS/ACHD are working on closed PODs for seniors in low-income high-rise buildings (~173 buildings housing 12,000 residents).

Guidance to Provider Community for Vaccine Rollout

- DHS has published [Vaccination Information and Guidance](#). Providers can email their questions about vaccine guidance, as well as share their best practices for encouraging staff to get vaccinated to: DHS-ProviderVaccination@alleghenycounty.us.

Program Updates

OCS

Food

Upcoming Food Distributions:

- Drive-up food distributions are happening on 2/1 (Duquesne), 2/9 (Allegheny Valley) and 2/11 (Glassport) – [details and registration here](#).
- Don't forget the [Food Bank's network of food pantries](#) for more consistent access to food.

Health of the Homelessness System

- Providers are still operating, sheltering, taking in new clients.
- No new Section 8 Vouchers yet
- Adult shelter beds available at some year-round shelters (EECM, Bethlehem Haven, Light of Life). CALL AHEAD BEFORE SENDING ANYONE.
- Beds filling up most nights at Smithfield and McKeesport winter shelters. People can still come; the overflow sent to Safe Haven.
- Shepherd's Heart winter shelter (females) has open beds.
- Youth shelter beds available at DOCS.
- Several family shelter units available for families of up to 4 members.
- Warming Centers open during hours winter shelters are closed. Open centers are at Red Door downtown, McKeesport Downtown Housing and Catholic Charities on 9th & Liberty.
- Isolation and Quarantine facilities are up and running. We are receiving high numbers of referrals.

Housing Updates

- Point-in-Time (PIT) Count follow up:
 - All client data must be in HMIS no later than February 1 (this coming Monday!).
 - Surveys of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness can be submitted through February 10 via the Microsoft form.
 - Questions or access to PIT survey form: Contact Jessica McKown at jessica.mckown@alleghenycounty.us.
- Pennsylvanians experiencing homelessness are eligible for a free initial State photo ID or renewal.
 - [PA Homeless Photo Identification Card Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Identification and Residency Requirements For U.S. Citizens](#)
- New youth (18-24) homelessness prevention and diversion program is available
 - Contact the Allegheny Link at 866-730-2368; or

- Reach out to Gray DeHaven at Auberle directly by phone 412-267-5270 or email (grayd@auberle.org)
- You are invited to give kudos to the Continuum of Care community here: <https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/CpL49xOS>
- Upcoming Meetings
 - Housing & Homelessness Provider Calls
 - Every other Tuesday @ 9:30 am
 - Next Call: Feb 2nd
 - Featuring: HUD Field Office Director, Phillip McKeough
 - [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)
 - [+1 267-368-7515](tel:+12673687515)
 - Conference ID: 883 836 652#
 - Ask a Navigator Office Hours
 - Every Tuesday, 10:30 am-11 am
 - [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)
 - [+1 267-368-7515](tel:+12673687515)
 - Conference ID: 947 434 365#

OBH

Mental Health Planning Council is interested in understanding the needs of mental and behavioral health and substance use providers, individuals in recovery and families in Pennsylvania during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- [Person-In-Recovery/Peer/Family Member/Support Person Survey](#)
- [Provider/County Agency Survey](#)
- Surveys close February 12th

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