



**COVID-19 DHS Provider Meeting**  
**February 18, 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 helping a client find a testing location..
- 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 three solicitations](#):

- RFI for Racial Equity Training and Support Directory – published 2/18
  - Re-release of RFI in order to add additional resources to directory
  - Next deadline is March 15
  - This is an ongoing solicitation with quarterly deadlines.
- RFQ for Forensic Psychological and/or Psychiatric Evaluators
  - Next deadline is March 1
  - This is an ongoing solicitation with deadlines of March 1 and September 1 of each year.
- CCBH/DHS RFP for a Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility
  - Proposals are due April 1.
  - Proposals must be submitted through CCBH, not DHS, but you can find the RFP on DHS's Solicitations page.

### Bridging the Digital Divide

- Free public Wi-Fi is available at 10 sites. Find them at [www.wifi.alleghenycounty.us](http://www.wifi.alleghenycounty.us).
- Remember, the Digital Divide Device Program has re-opened! Previously submitted eligible requests will be filled as supplies are available. We welcome the submission of new requests for clients in need. The link to submit new requests can be found here: [DHS Device Request Form](#). This is for anyone, not just CYF youth and families.

### Information Sessions: The Latest Facts on the Available COVID-19 Vaccines

- February 24, 5:00—6:00 pm via Zoom
- Hosted by East Liberty Family Health Care Center
- Session is open to the public.
- Please register for the session here:  
[https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYkcOmpzopE9Msyog2yxvSVNR2\\_cXZIGX1](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYkcOmpzopE9Msyog2yxvSVNR2_cXZIGX1)
- Notes from DHS's COVID-19 vaccine info sessions with Dr. Rhonda Johnson are available on the DHS Provider website under "Vaccination Information and Guidance."
- Please email [DHS-ProviderVaccination@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:DHS-ProviderVaccination@alleghenycounty.us) if you'd like to share details of other upcoming informational sessions with the provider network!

All [PA State metrics](#) continue to decline in Allegheny County.

#### Upcoming Food Distributions:

- Drive-up food bank distributions are happening on 2/27 (Wilkinsburg), 3/1 (Duquesne) and 3/9 (Allegheny Valley) – [details and registration here](#).
- There is also a Sysco/412 Food Rescue Distribution on 2/24 at 1 pm at 1575 Electric Avenue in Pittsburgh.
- Other regularly occurring distributionse:
  - Farmers to Families Food Box Program, Saturdays at 10 am through April, 301 College Drive in Monroeville
  - Hill District Distribution, Saturdays 8 am-2 pm through April, 1435 Bedford Ave in Pittsburgh
  - Pop-Up No-Cost Produce Markets occur twice monthly in the Hill District, Northside, Sharpsburg, East Liberty, Homewood and Wilkinsburg. See the slide presentation for details
- Don't forget the [Food Bank's network of food pantries](#) for more consistent access to food.

### Legislative/Policy Updates

#### State and Local Updates

- Application period is open for the new Mixed Earners Unemployment Compensation (MEUC) program, which provides a \$100/week additional unemployment benefit.
  - PA launched the program Sunday, Feb 14, with a deadline for applications and all required documentation by Friday, March 12. Payments will begin in several weeks and will be retroactive.
  - Eligibility is based on an individual having at least \$5,000 of net income from self-employment and receiving an unemployment benefit from a program other than Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) during a specific time period.
  - More information online from the PA Dept of Labor and Industry, including information explaining that this benefit is not excluded as income for Medicaid and CHIP eligibility: [Filing for MEUC](#)
- Pennie, PA's health insurance exchange, is holding an additional open enrollment period from February 15 through March 15.
  - Anyone who experiences a qualifying life event is eligible to enroll anytime during the year.
  - Pennie will connect eligible applicants to Medicaid or CHIP.
  - For more information and enrollment assistance: [pennie.com](#) or 844-844-8040.
- SNAP has a temporarily available [expanded eligibility for college students](#).
  - Students now eligible for SNAP if they are eligible for a state/federal work study program or have an estimated family contribution of \$0 on their federal student aid determination.
- The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency has three open grant opportunities targeted towards youth and adults.

- Funding is available to provide research-based approaches to prevention, intervention, training, treatment and education services to reduce substance use or to provide resources to assist youth and families in accessing these services.
- [Links to funding announcements](#); application deadline of February 24.
- Port Authority is seeking public input on its 25-year plan to improve county transit through [NEXTransit](#), its community-led planning effort.
  - Four virtual hearings are scheduled: Thursday, February 25 at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., and Tuesday, March 2 at 11:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.
  - Register online: [Events — NEXTransit](#)
- The Alliance for Police Accountability has collected enough signatures to get two criminal justice initiatives on the May 18 primary election ballot:
  - Ending use of solitary confinement in Allegheny County Jail; and
  - Prohibiting the use of no-knock warrants by Pittsburgh Police officers; Pittsburgh City Council is also currently considering legislation that would ban no-knock warrants.

### Vaccine Update and Tracking

According to the [state's dashboard](#), 93,863 people have received only one shot and 44,002 have been fully vaccinated. About 11% of Allegheny County's population has received at least one shot.

### **Program Updates**

#### OCS

Focus on Attendance Partnership between K-12 schools, DHS, Courts and service providers

- Provides technical assistance and coordination of services to every school district and most charter schools.
- Compared to this time last year, referrals have doubled and some eligibility guidelines have been waived.
  - 1,113 referrals originating from schools
  - 1,134 referrals originating from MDJ truancy citations (expect this number to grow significantly in the second semester)
- Current focus:
  - Early in the school year, focus was on connecting students to technology and virtual school.
  - A group of Education Specialists (in OBH) help special education students with virtual education.
  - Many students are not logging on, and engagement is tough.
  - Through the end of the school year, the focus will be on connecting with CYF-involved youth, homeless-involved youth and youth whose families don't speak English primarily at home.
  - We will also continue to partner with the AIU and individual school districts to stay up to date on summer plans (summer programming and engagement, credit retrieval, etc.)
- If you are working with children and families, we invite you to connect with us: Email [Focus\\_Attendance@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:Focus_Attendance@alleghenycounty.us), Call 412-918-9206

### **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 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**