

Children's Services Agency (CSA) Interim Policy Guidance Resulting from COVID-19 Health Concerns

Below is a brief summary of each of the Communication Issuances (CI) disseminated from Thursday 3/19/2020 to Tuesday 05/05/2020. Please read each issuance relevant to your work duties in full to ensure understanding; these summaries are not intended to replace the full guidance.

All Child Welfare

[20-032 COVID-19 Response-Updated Interim Caseworker Guidance for Face to Face Contacts Parenting Time Sibling Visits - REVISED 5 4 20.pdf](#) (updated 04/24/2020, previous editions obsolete)

- Face to face contacts (CPS investigations, CPS ongoing, foster care and juvenile justice), parenting time and sibling visits have been modified to account for safety of staff and children and their parents/caregivers.

[20-033 COVID-19 Response-Drug Screen Collection Suspension.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- MDHHS has suspended all oral fluid collections by MDHHS and private agency staff.
- Limited testing ability will still be available through third-party administrators (TPAs).

[20-043 COVID-19 Response-Title IV-E Determinations and Court Hearings.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Many courts have or will be changing their procedures regarding hearings and how they are currently managing their dockets.
- Permanency Planning Hearings and 24-hour Preliminary and Emergency Removal Hearings following a child being taken into protective custody have been deemed essential functions of the court during this timeframe; as such, courts may continue to hold these hearing types.
- To establish a child's eligibility for Title IV-E funding, the court must continue to make the contrary to the welfare & reasonable efforts to prevent the removal and reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan determinations on an order.

[20-045 COVID-19 Response-Caseworker Contacts in MiSACWIS.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Guidance for documenting contacts in MiSACWIS during COVID-19.
- If you are utilizing Skype, FaceTime, or any video conferencing alternative to make face-to-face contacts, please select Video Conference as the Contact Method.

[20-047 COVID-19 Response-Drug Screen Collection Suspension.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- MDHHS referral of clients for drug screen collections is suspended. This includes all client collections at Third Party Administrators (TPAs) until at least 04/30/2020.
- Guidance is unrelated to drug testing that is identified as necessary by a substance use provider as part of the person's treatment program.

[20-048 COVID-19 Response-Comprehensive Trauma Assessments Referral-Participation Suspension.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Temporarily suspends referrals for comprehensive trauma assessments.
- Contact the local Community Mental Health (CMH) Service Provider if a child is experiencing an emergency mental health need.

[20-049 COVID-19 Response-Temporary Manual Medicaid Referrals Required in MiSACWIS.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- To open Medicaid, a manual referral must be sent.
- For instructions on manual Medicaid referrals, see the attached “Medicaid in MiSACWIS” job aid, under “FCDW Medicaid does not open in Bridges” on page 2.
- [20-049.1 Medicaid in MiSACWIS Job Aid.pdf](#)

[20-051 COVID-19 Response-Provider New Hires Central Registry Clearances.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- The Division of Child Welfare Licensing (DCWL) will complete Central Registry clearances for staff hiring.
- Submit the completed DHS-1929 to the DCWL mailbox.

[20-052 COVID-19 Response-Redaction and Expungement Unit Requests.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- The Redaction and Expungement Units will continue to process requests in which the records to be redacted are available in MiSACWIS.

[20-054 COVID-19 Response-Child Advocacy Center \(CAC\) Guidelines.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- An interim process that defines how CACs will operate during the COVID-19 health crisis should be developed with the local prosecuting attorney and CACs, to define when emergent forensic interviews and emergent forensic medical examinations will be completed.
- [20-054.1 Interim Medical Services for Children's Advocacy Centers \(CACs\).pdf](#)

[20-055 COVID-19 Response-Guidance on Relative Placement Safety Screen and Relative Placement Home Study Completion.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- It is preferred that the MDHHS-5770 and 3130A be completed remotely by completing the questions over the phone with pertinent relatives and then using Skype, FaceTime, or other available technology to complete a virtual walk-through of the inside of the home.
- Consult your supervisor to determine whether an on-site inspection is necessary to further assess the home and assure safety.

[20-056 COVID-19 Response-Alternate Signatures.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- The attached provides guidance for alternate signatures in response to current COVID-19 health concerns.

[20-057 COVID-19 Response-Guidelines for Working with Families Affected by Substance Use Disorder \(SUD\) - 5.05.20.pdf](#)

- Highlights assistance available for families affected by substance use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[20-060 COVID-19 Response-Initial Placement-Placement Change and Best Practices for COVID-19 Positive Individuals 4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Guidance for CPS, foster care, and juvenile justice caseworkers regarding initial placements, replacements, respite care, and travel in response to current COVID-19 health concerns.
- Also included are best practices for caring for youth who have or are being placed in a home with someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19.

[20-061 COVID-19 Response-Notification Requirements for COVID-19 Positive Individuals.4.30.20.pdf](#) *(updated 04/14/2020, previous edition obsolete)*

- Children placed into foster care may develop COVID-19 or symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
- Guidance for CCI, foster care and juvenile justice caseworkers regarding notification and reporting requirements for a child with symptoms or diagnosed with COVID-19.

[20-064 Statewide Medical Experts Contact List.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- The statewide Child Abuse Medical Expert contact list has been updated to provide practice changes due to COVID-19.
- [20-064.1 2020 Statewide Child Abuse Medical Resource Contact List.pdf](#)

[20-071 Rapid Reunification and Family Preservation Service Guidelines.pdf](#)

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that programs and services adapt to meet the changing needs of those being served.
- The Rapid Reunification initiative seeks to safely reunify children with their families as quickly as possible.
- Family preservation and reunification programs are essential complements to this project.

[20-039 COVID-19 Response-Entrance to Health Care Facilities REVISED.5.4.20.pdf](#)

- Executive Order 2020-72 imposes limited and temporary restrictions on entry of individuals into health care facilities, residential care facilities, congregate care facilities, and juvenile justice facilities. These changes may affect child welfare contact during CPS investigations and foster care case management activities.
- Requires all staff members and visitors of a residential care facility, congregate care facility, or juvenile justice facility to wear a covering over their nose and mouth when indoors or within six feet of another person. CPS and foster care staff should access hospitals only when necessary.

Family Preservation

[20-041 COVID-19 Response-Central Office Family Preservation Providers Face to Face Contacts with Families.4.30.20.pdf](#) *(updated 03/25/2020, previous edition obsolete)*

- Guidance for Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) contracted Family Preservation providers regarding conducting in person contacts for children and families in response to current COVID-19 health concerns.

[20-050 COVID-19 Response-MDHHS Local Office Family Preservation Providers Face to Face Contacts with Families.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Guidance for conducting in person contacts with children and families.
- Allowable alternatives to in person contacts must be utilized and may include phone calls, Skype, Facetime, or other technology that allows delivery of parent education and support services. Contracted providers should work with families to ensure access to either phone or video chat capabilities whenever possible.

Children's Protective Services

[20-046 COVID-19 Response-Central Registry Notification.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- The supervisor should electronically sign the document via PDF and forward to their local general office assistant (GOA), or other staff member designated by the local office director, who remains in the office for mail and other clerical responsibilities.
- The GOA will send, at least weekly, the CR notifications via registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, and delivery restricted to addressee. The GOA will upload the signed document and certified mail information into the document hyperlink of the associated investigation in MiSACWIS.

[20-053 COVID-19 Response-Supervisory Control Protocol.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Guidance for CPS supervisors for completion of the SCP as it relates to activities that may be impacted by current COVID-19 health concerns.

[20-067 DHHS 1224 CI COVID-19.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, CPS caseworkers may send the DHHS-1224, *Complaint Source Notification Letter* via encrypted email.

Foster Care

[20-040 COVID-19 Response-Health Care for Children in Care.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that all elective surgeries, non-essential medical, surgical, and dental procedures be delayed during the COVID-19 outbreak. Includes non-emergent well-child and dental exams.
- Urgent child health needs must be elevated and resolved.

[20-044 COVID-19 Response-Foster Care Supportive Visitation \(FCSV\) Alternative Visitation Information.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- In-person Foster Care Supportive Visitation (FCSV) services are suspended.
- FCSV coaches should use alternative methods to engage with parents and workers, including phone, Skype, FaceTime, or other available technology.

[20-065 COVID-19 Response Determination of Care \(DOC\).4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Contracted child placing agency foster care and juvenile justice caseworkers should complete a DOC re/assessment if foster parent activity has changed but should not reduce the DOC level because of any temporary restrictions in activity due to COVID-19.

[20-068 COVID-19 Guidance for Education Requirements Final.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Children who experience a placement/replacement between now and the end of the current academic school year should remain enrolled in the school they were attending *prior* to the move.
- Current DOC levels should be reassessed if requested by a foster parent/relative caregiver.
- Youth placed in foster care are eligible for free or reduced lunch. School districts are required to provide free lunches for eligible students while in-person education is suspended.

Older Youth Services (YAVFC, ETV, Independent Living, Mentor Contracts)

[20-029 COVID-19 Response-Mentor Contractors.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Mentor contract requirements for face to face contacts, meetings and trainings are currently suspended; alternative contact via phone, Skype, Facetime or other technology is encouraged.

[20-031 COVID-19 Response-Youth in Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care and Independent Living.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- The contract requirements for in-person contact with students is suspended at this time. Use of phone calls, Skype, Facetime or other technology should be used to maintain relationships and provide assistance to students being served.

[20-036 COVID-19 Response-Independent Living Skills Coach Contract and Education Training Voucher Updates.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Changes to Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care (YAVFC) and Youth in Transition (YIT) funded housing supports are available to eligible youth.

[20-066 Covid-19 Opportunities to Support Older Youth.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Maintaining the health and safety of older youth is critical during the COVID-19 pandemic. Four ways to support youth over age 18 include:
 - Continue Foster Care
 - Enroll Youth in Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care (YAVFC)
 - Maintain Youth in YAVFC
 - Extend Stipends

Child Caring Institutions

[20-034 COVID-19 Response-Child Caring Institutions Staffing Ratio.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- For the next 30 days, program office will not need to pre-approve deviations from current contracted staff-to-resident ratios as a result of staffing changes related to COVID-19.
- If a CCI falls below or suspects falling below required licensing ratio, a variance request must be submitted to the Division of Child Welfare Licensing for approval.

- If a variance is approved, the CCI must develop an interim plan designed to maintain resident safety.

[20-037 COVID-19 Response-Child Caring Institutions Sleeping Rooms.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Effective immediately, if a CCI experiences a need to temporarily move youth from assigned sleeping rooms to other spaces, including non-traditional sleeping spaces or spaces in other buildings on a facility's campus, a variance request must be submitted to the Division of Child Welfare Licensing (DCWL) for approval.

[20-038 COVID Response-Guidance for Congregate Settings.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Guidance for congregate setting facilities to prevent the introduction of COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases into the facility, manage known or potential exposures, and prevent widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the facility.

[20-034 COVID-19 Response-Child Caring Institutions Staffing Ratio 5.05.20.pdf](#)

(updated 04/08/2020, previous editions obsolete)

- Executive Order 2020-37 imposes limited and temporary restrictions on entry of individuals into health care facilities, residential care facilities, congregate care facilities, and juvenile justice facilities. These changes may affect child welfare contact during CPS investigations and foster care case management activities.
- CPS and foster care staff should access hospitals only when necessary.

[20-058 COVID-19 Response-Consideration of Early Release for Juvenile Justice Youth.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Juvenile justice specialists and residential and detention staff should work with the youth's court of jurisdiction to review files and determine whether it is appropriate to recommend early release.

[20-062 COVID-19 Response-Child Caring Institutions New Hires-Tuberculosis Testing 4.30.20.pdf](#)

- CCI providers may utilize the TB Symptom Screening Questionnaire in lieu of having new staff tested for TB during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A TB test must be obtained as soon as it becomes available.
- [20-062.1 Tuberculosis Symptom Screening Questionnaire.pdf](#)

[20-063 COVID-19 Response - staffing.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- MDHHS is requesting that all contracted abuse/neglect and juvenile justice CCIs submit the listed information daily, in order to forecast where staffing shortages may occur.
- In response to staffing shortages, MDHHS has developed guidance for licensing rules that can be modified or given a variance.

Child Welfare Licensing

[20-035 COVID-19 Response-Updated Guidance to Child Welfare Foster Home Licensing Staff.4.30.20.pdf](#) *(updated 03/26/2020, previous edition obsolete)*

- Modifications to the process for renewal of licenses for foster family homes and foster family group homes.
- Face to face requirements for renewal and annual evaluations of foster homes are currently suspended until 04/30/2020; alternative methods of contact are allowable and should be used.
- Until April 30, 2020, enrollments will be sent to DCWL electronically at MDHHS-DCWL-TA@michigan.gov.

[20-042 COVID-19 Response-Guidance to Child Welfare Foster Home Licensing Staff-Special Evaluations.4.30.20.pdf](#)

- Guidance for completing special evaluations for foster family homes and foster family group homes, and to address the continuity of necessary contact by child welfare licensing staff during the COVID-19 health crisis. (body obsolete)