

 <p>Children's Services Agency</p> <p>Communication Issuance</p> <p>20-042</p>	Subject/Title	COVID 19 Response-Guidance to Child Welfare Foster Home Licensing Staff-Special Evaluations
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Distribution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSA Central Office Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS BSC and County Directors <input type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Tribes <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Workforce Development and Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Agency Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Abuse/Neglect Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

The following guidance is being provided to assure procedures are in place to complete 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. The safety of children, foster parents and staff is paramount, requiring modifications to the current processes as outlined below:

Foster Home Special Evaluations: Effective immediately, until at least April 6, 2020, face to face contacts for the completion of special evaluations are not required, with the exception of limited circumstances in which licensing staff must make on-site contact to respond to a child safety issue. Allowable alternatives to face to face are permitted, including phone calls, Skype, FaceTime, or other technology that allows verification of child safety and ability to address identified concerns, and licensing rules. Allowable alternatives should be documented within the Special Evaluation Report, CWL-4005, in MiSACWIS with the rationale "COVID-19."

Documentation: Licensing workers must continue to create the MiSACWIS non-CPS intake and send the Special Evaluation Record, CWL-259, to the Division of Child Welfare Licensing (DCWL) for processing. Creation of the non-CPS intake will allow workers to complete all required documentation in MiSACWIS.

Resources: Staff should regularly check <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> for updated information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and <http://michigan.gov/coronavirus> for updates from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

**Please note that all COVID-19 related communications will be revisited, at minimum, every two weeks, unless additional interim guidance is needed.*