

**From:** [MSHDA-HS](#)  
**Subject:** MSHDA Homeless Solutions Newsletter 3/20/2020  
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## From the Office of Homeless Solutions

- *Update: Message for ESG Grantees*
- *MDHHS Webinar: Today*
- *Where to Direct COVID-19 Questions*
- *MCAH Update: ROIs*
- *Survey from MCAH for CoC and LPBs*
- *Update: BMCC*
- *Got a Question?*

### **UPDATE: Message to All ESG Grantees**

This is a critical time for all of our communities and that means the services each of you provide are more important than ever. This is especially true for HARAs and emergency shelters. Many of you are making decisions this week about how best to continue these services. **Please consider the following:**

Remain open and accessible to those most in need: This is the time to think creatively about providing services in ways that reduce unnecessary contact. Consider technology where feasible (phone, web-based), mailing documents or using secured, physical drop-boxes for receiving documents, etc.

Take steps to ensure safety for everyone: Follow CDC guidance on social distancing, frequent cleaning of spaces and items, lessening congestion in public spaces, and remote work where feasible. You can find this information and more on the [State of Michigan website](#).

Review ESG budgets and consider any changes your CoC or LPB may need: HUD provided guidance on eligible purchases through approved budget lines. You can view this guidance [here](#). If your CoC or LPB would like to adjust budget line items to complete these purchases, please contact your MSHDA Homeless Assistance Specialist.

### **NEW - Signatures for ESG Forms:**

ESG grantees can accept verbal "signatures" on ESG forms during this time.

- Notate as "verbal signature" for each form completed.
- Provide staff initials and date when collecting the verbal signature.
- Track verbal signatures and plan to secure actual signatures on ESG forms when feasible and safe to do so.

### **Specific HARA Request:**

Please submit HARA operation plans to your MSHDA Homeless Assistance Specialist as soon as possible. Specifically, any changes to operations during this time and how community members can still access services (i.e. phone assessments, physical drop-box for documents, etc).

### **HCV Homeless Preference - Updates:**

- HARAs can secure verbal ROIs for HCV Homeless Preference at this time. Please note the use of verbal ROI on the HCV ROI document.

Recertifications of homelessness can be acquired by phone or email contact but information of current homeless location must be detailed and descriptive.

- The timeline to complete HCV Homeless Preference applications is extended from 5 days to 15 business days until further notice.

**ESG and Rental Unit Inspections:**

For participants moving into new, vacant rental units (either through homeless prevention or rapid re-housing), it is still necessary to complete a Habitability Standards Inspection. These units are typically empty and can be inspected safely with appropriate social distancing. Inspections of occupied units can be postponed until the unit can be safely accessed.

**Thank you all so much for your continued service.** MSHDA staff remain accessible to answer questions and provide support during this time. We are currently working with staff from MDHHS and MCAH to provide additional information for all partners on the Michigan Campaign to End Homelessness website and we will notify everyone as soon as this is available.

In the meantime, stay connected to the latest updates with [HUD](#), the [State of Michigan](#), and the [CDC](#). **Also, please send any ESG questions to the [Homeless Solutions email](#) and we'll work with you as quickly as possible.**



## **Webinar Opportunity: COVID-19 Information for Homeless Providers**

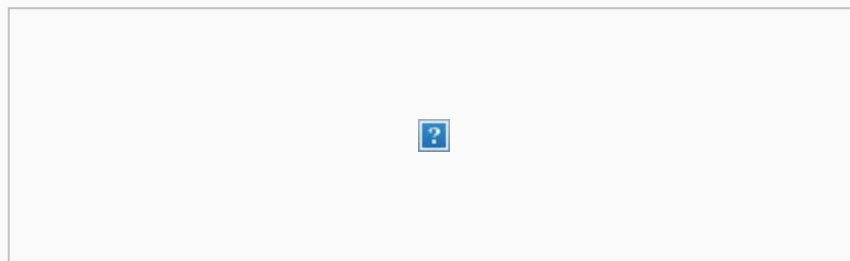
During this difficult time, we know that Homeless providers have many questions. MDHHS Housing and Homeless Services is pleased to be able offer a webinar that will provide COVID-19 information.

The webinar will cover Client Practices, Community Coordination, and Infection Control.

**Friday, Mar 20, 2020 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 - Click [HERE](#) to Register**

We will record this and send out the recording link as well as the webinar slides after.

Many thanks,  
The MDHHS Housing and Homeless Services Team



## **Homeless Providers: Where to Direct COVID-19 Questions**

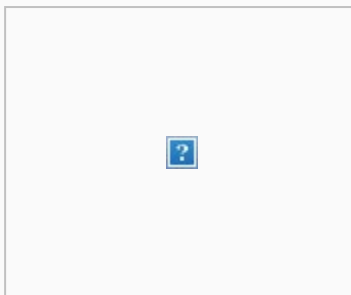
In order to best assist homeless providers through this difficult crisis, we want to encourage you to **send any questions you have about**

**the Coronavirus outbreak *and* providing services during this time to [MDHHS-homeless@michigan.gov](mailto:MDHHS-homeless@michigan.gov).** MDHHS Housing and Homeless Services will be working with our state partners to get you the answers you need as quickly as possible.

In addition, we will be routinely sharing frequently asked questions and answers to help broadly share information.

Thank you for all your efforts,  
The MDHHS Housing and Homeless Services team

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## **Oral ROI for COVID-19 Intakes in HMIS**

MCAH received a critical ask from agencies about how to handle client intakes in cases where agencies are conducting phone only interviews due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. The following is an oral release of information document that your agencies can use in lieu of getting a signed paper ROI. Of note, this oral ROI was developed specifically for the COVID-19 emergency and should only be used during the pandemic itself. Agencies should revert back to their standard release protocols when they resume normal operations.

[HMIS COVID-19 Oral Release of Information Guidance Document](#)

If you have any questions, please submit them to the [MCAH Help Desk](#).



## **MCAH, Coronavirus, and You**

We are in uncertain times in Michigan. The Coronavirus and the disease it causes, COVID-19, is spreading through our communities. Our government has taken action to try to contain it and many communities are working independently to find ways to protect some of our most vulnerable members.

***We all know that individuals experiencing homelessness are going to be some of the hardest people to protect and serve right now.***

The Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness (MCAH) is working with our partners from the [Michigan Campaign to End Homelessness](#), including MDHHS and MSHDA, to coordinate and inform our communities as they work through this unique situation. Things are changing rapidly, and will continue to do so for a long time to come.

**We hope in the following days to be able to share resources and information with you and to continue to be your partner throughout this entire public health emergency.**

In the meantime, we are asking that you help us understand how the Coronavirus is affecting your community and what you need to best address the challenges you're facing. **We know it's a busy time, but please take a few minutes to answer these short questions [here](#).**

This information will help us and our state partners to understand what we can be doing with our advocacy, coordination, and more to best help Michigan communities.

As we all fight to provide the best care for the people we serve, we at MCAH want to pause to say thank you. Right now you are all making hard decisions and working in difficult circumstances. We are grateful for you and all that you are doing. Thank you.

Stay healthy,

The MCAH team

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In accordance with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' [recommendations designed to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#), the **Building Michigan Communities Conference** scheduled for April 28 – 29 has been canceled.

The state is taking proactive steps to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in Michigan.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in reducing the risk of coronavirus to Michigan residents.

**For current and up-to-date information regarding the Coronavirus** visit <http://www.Michigan.gov/Coronavirus> or <http://www.CDC.gov/Coronavirus>.



We are working to process refunds and expect to have that completed by the end of the week.

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## Got a Question?

We want to hear from you! Send us an [email](#) with questions you have about Homeless Solutions and we'll follow up. If we receive a lot emails with the same question, we'll share the question and response in the next newsletter.

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### Our mailing address is:

735 E Michigan Ave, Lansing, MI 48909

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