

August 7, 2020

Dear DCS Contracted Service Providers,

As we continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation in Arizona, the Department is constantly reassessing our directives & guidelines to determine if extensions, alterations, or expiration is warranted. At this time, **the Department is extending the expiration date to allow for virtual services to continue through 9/30/2020**. Please review in detail the service delivery modifications below as they may have changed from previous directives.

DCS Contracted service providers should prepare and plan to slowly transition back to in-person service delivery as outlined in existing contract scopes of work. While DCS remains cautious and open to making modifications and/or extending this directive if required, the Department plans to return to full in-person service delivery after 9/30/2020. In addition, DCS will continue to review what virtual service modifications can remain and amended in the contracts' scopes of work going forward.

Please continue to reference the DCS COVID-19 website for more information & resources - <https://dcs.az.gov/covid19>.

Foster & Adoption Supports

- Some licensing activities may be completed virtually through **9/30/2020**.
 - Licensing agencies should begin to slowly transition back to in person contact as outlined in the contract scope of work. Focusing attention on newly licensed families who received placement during COVID-19 and/or families who have expressed a need for additional support.
 - All temporary considerations will be extended to **9/30/2020** but should be completed and current by **9/30/2020**.
- Foster Parent College training may be conducted virtually through **9/30/2020** any class that begins prior to 9/30/2020 will be permitted to complete virtually.
- DCS will continue to do routine in-person visits.

Parent Aide/SVO

- DCS has returned to in-person visits after 5/29/20.
- Providers are able to request virtual visits if the birth parent and/or caregiver has a qualifying situation. Please reference "*Letter to Caregivers #22*" which will outline the permissible exceptions for virtual visits to be held between 8/17/2020 to 9/30/2020 (<https://dcs.az.gov/covid19>).¹

¹ All existing virtual visit exceptions are approved through 8/17/2020, following that date a new request must be made and approved to continue virtual visits.

- Parent Aide Skill Building sessions may be conducted virtually through 9/30/20 after at least two in-person sessions in order to establish rapport and engagement with the family. Intake meetings are required to be conducted in-person.
- Continue to follow the DCS In-Person Visit Guidelines (<https://dcs.az.gov/covid19>).

In-Home - Preservation & Reunification

- If a family has tested positive for COVID-19 or symptomatic or is self-quarantined pending results of a COVID test, we are not requiring provider staff to enter the home in these cases. Providers are to go to the home and put eyes on child. We are asking providers to see the children either through the window, at distance, or some creative way to check on the family.
- For Moderate Preservation cases – 1 in-person contact per week is required, remaining contacts can be conducted virtually through 9/30/20.
- For Intensive Preservation cases – 1 in-person contact per week is required. Families with an existing safety threat are required to have 2 in-person contacts per week, remaining contacts can be conducted virtually through 9/30/20.
- For Reunification cases – 1 in-person contact per week is required. Families with an existing safety threat are required to have 2 in-person contacts per week, remaining contacts can be conducted virtually through 9/30/20.
- Continue to follow the DCS In-Person Visit Guidelines (<https://dcs.az.gov/covid19>).

In-Home - SENSE (Nurse Home Visits)

- Home visits made by the SENSE trained nurse should continue to be done in-person. This includes the assessment of children(s) general health and developmental screenings.
- All other activities including the completion of the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression scale, education of safety, safe sleep practices, and other resources may be completed virtually through 9/30/20.
- If a family member in the home has tested positive for COVID-19, is symptomatic or is self-quarantined pending results of a COVID-19 test, nurse home visits may be rescheduled until participants are symptom free for at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and at least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever (including fever, chills, rigors, and body/muscle aches) without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms. If a nurse home visit is postponed longer than 3 weeks, a virtual visit should be conducted with a follow up in-person visit following the isolation period.
- Continue to follow the DCS In-Person Visit Guidelines (<https://dcs.az.gov/covid19>).

Building Resilient Families

- In the home services may be provided virtually through 9/30/20.

Psych/Counseling & Unit Consultation Services

- Psychological Evaluations shall continue in-person as long as both parties are symptom free for 72 hours without the aid of medication.
- Individual/Family Counseling Services may be provided via Telemed system through 9/30/20.
- Unit Consultation with DCS staff may be provided virtually through 9/30/20.
 - Clinical interviews with parents and other participants should be done in-person.

Home Assessment & Courtesy Supervision & ICPC

- Emergency & Scheduled Visitation returned to in-person after 5/29/20.
- At least 1 in-person contact with the family must be completed; follow up contacts may be conducted virtually until 9/30/20.

- Monthly ICPC child contacts shall have at least 1 in-person visit completed by 9/30/20.

Young Adult Programs (Independent Living Skills & Fostering Sustainable Connections)

- Services shall be delivered in-person utilizing the precautions outlined in the DCS In-Person Visitation Guides.
- If a youth has symptoms, has tested positive for COVID-19 or pending a test result of COVID-19, the service may be rescheduled until the youth is symptom free for at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared and at least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever and need for medication.
- If the youth does not wish to participate in in-person services due to COVID related concerns, virtual visits may be provided through 9/30/20 when the youth, caregiver and the DCS Specialist are in agreement that the virtual delivery will accomplish the service goals. The contracted provider shall document this agreement in the youth's monthly report.

All contracted services should be conducted virtually if anyone in the household involved with the service has reported symptoms of COVID-19, tested positive for COVID-19, or pending a test for COVID-19. Services shall return to in-person after the CDC recommended isolation period (at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND at least 24 hours have passed without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in symptoms). All other exceptions for virtual services are subject to DCS Program Manager & Program Administrator approval.

Thank you for your partnership,

Mike Faust
Director