

May 8, 2020

DCS Caregivers,

Throughout this public health crisis you have continually displayed a loving commitment to the children in care. Your commitment existed prior to this event, and has been magnified in this time of need. Thank you for all you have, are, and continue to do in support of children and their families.

As was communicated last week, the Department is working towards resuming the in-person child contacts between children and their Specialists - these contacts will resume starting May 16<sup>th</sup>. The Department has been developing guidance for staff regarding safety protocols while conducting in-person contacts, including topics like physical distancing, wearing a face covering, scheduling visits and practice good hand hygiene. . A copy of that guidance is included in this communication.

I fully appreciate that there are concerns on whether the community should be reopening and the timing of relaxing stay at home orders. It is with that in mind that our guidance document and subsequent staff communications have been developed and reviewed by medical professionals while following recommendations of the CDC. The early advance communication of resuming in-person child contacts was to allow time to develop these processes, as well as identify and address concerns that may arise.

As a community, we are all striving to serve children while supporting families, caregivers and our staffs. As we do each week, Department leaders meet with DCS contracted service providers including Foster and Adoptive Support licensing agencies, Group Homes and Parent Aide Providers. Through today's discussions, similar to most weeks, we collaborated on resolution of obstacles to supporting children, caregivers and families such as ensuring face covering are required.

As we transition back towards our regular practices, please know that much thought and effort is going into the decision and protocols we implement. We are here to support you while you strive so hard to provide loving care and meet the needs of the children in your homes.

Thank you for all you do and have a safe and Happy Mother's Day weekend.

Mike Faust  
Director