

September 11, 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. In the past months, the state has seen significant progress in containing and reducing the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. **At this time based on Arizona's reported COVID-19 data, the Department will be letting the "COVID-19 Letter on Extending Virtual Services" directive issued on August 7th expire. Unless otherwise stated below, starting October 1st, DCS contracted service providers shall return to providing services in-person as outlined in their contract scopes of work.**

The Department will remain flexible and continues to be mindful and cautious of the COVID-19 virus and the associated impact to serving Arizona children and families. Below are guidelines & areas in our contracted services where service modifications may be considered due to the risk of COVID-19.

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

General Guidelines:

- All contracted services shall 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.
 - If a client is reporting symptoms of COVID-19 they should be instructed to seek a COVID-19 test. If the test results are negative, services should return to in-person.
 - If a client tests positive or refuses testing, 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 must have written approval from DCS Program Manager & Program Administrator.
- Continue to follow the DCS In-Person Visit Guidelines (<https://dcs.az.gov/covid19>) for Child Contacts & Parenting Time (Visitation).

Foster & Adoption Supports

- All licensing activities & monitoring of home visits shall be done in person as outlined in the contract scope of work.
 - Support Groups may continue to be done virtually after 9/30/20.
 - All temporary considerations will expire and must be resolved by 9/30/2020. All Issues should be resolved by 09/30/20.

- Foster Parent College training to be done in person as outlined in the contract scope of work.
 - Any trainings that began prior to 9/30/20 may continue to be done virtually until completion.
- DCS will continue to do routine in-person visits.

Parent Aide/SVO

- Parent Aide Skill Building sessions may be conducted virtually 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.
 - If parents are not fully engaged in skill sessions services should be provided in person.
- Continue to follow the DCS In-Person Visit Guidelines (<https://dcs.az.gov/covid19>).

In-Home - Preservation & Reunification

- In-Home visits shall continue to be done in person based on the frequency outlined in the contract SOW. Allowable service delivery modifications due to COVID-19 are below:
 - For Moderate Preservation cases – **1 in-person contact per week** is required, remaining contacts can be conducted virtually.
 - 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.
 - 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.
- 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.
- 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 shall be done in person per the contract scope of work. This includes the assessment of children(s) general health and developmental screenings.
- 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. Nurse home visits should not be postponed longer than 3 weeks.
- Continue to follow the DCS In-Person Visit Guidelines (<https://dcs.az.gov/covid19>).

Building Resilient Families

- In the home services to be done in person as outlined in the contract scope of work starting **10/1/20**.

Psych/Counseling & Unit Consultation Services

- Psychological Evaluations should be delivered as outlined in the contract scope of work starting **10/1/20**.
- Individual/Family Counseling Services should be delivered as outlined in the contract scope of work starting **10/1/20**.

- Unit Consultation with DCS staff should be delivered as outlined in the contract scope of work starting 10/1/20.
 - Clinical interviews with parents and other participants should be done in-person.
 - Unit Consults shall report regularly as scheduled to their designated DCS field offices starting 10/1/20. Please work with your assigned DCS Program Manager & Program Administrator
- Telephonic consultations remain permissible as outlined in the contract scope of work.

Home Assessment & Courtesy Supervision & ICPC

- Emergency & Scheduled Visitation returned to in-person after 5/29/20.
- All initial and follow up contacts with the family will be done in-person starting 10/1/20.
- Monthly ICPC child contacts will be done in person as detailed in the contract scope of work starting 10/1/20.

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

- Services shall be delivered in-person per the contract scope of work following the precautions outlined in the DCS In-Person Visitation Guides.
- The best interest and preference of the youth should be considered if services are requested to be provided virtually.

Thank you for your partnership,

Mike Faust
Director