

April 6, 2020

To: DCS HACS and ICPC Providers,

On March 19, 2020 an administrative directive was issued permitting the use of virtual contacts between DCS Specialists and children during the COVID-19 public health emergency in lieu of face-to-face contacts. The directive was time limited with an expiration date of April 30th, 2020.

As the April 30th date approaches, the Department will closely monitor the public health situation and communicate with all parties if any change is warranted in this directive. Further changes to that directive will be informed by conditions around public health recommendations relating to the size of social gatherings.

This communication is to clarify the implications of that directive on the Home Assessment Courtesy Supervision (HACS) and Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) contractual requirements and permits the following exceptions through April 30th.

ICPC Requirements:

- Monthly ICPC child contacts may be conducted virtually with the preferred method being video conferencing. If the caregiver does not have access to video conferencing technology then telephonic contact may be utilized.
 - Case notes should reference that as a result of the COVID-19 public health crisis, the contact was made virtually and the method by which contact was made.

Home Study requirements:

- Home studies for which DCS is waiting in order to place a child in the home must be done face-to-face per the current contractual requirements.
- Situations where the home study may be delayed until after April 30th include:
 - DCS has already placed children in the home following an emergency home check conducted by the Department.
 - The home check is requested as a prospective placement but there are no immediate plans to transition children into the home. Confirmation of these scenarios must be staffed with the Program Manager of the requesting DCS field office.
- In the event the contractor is delaying a face-to-face home study until after April 30th, the contractor must log the reason for the delay. Upon lifting of this directive, the contractor must provide a plan to the Department on how it will expeditiously complete the backlog of home studies.