Guidance for Private Providers and Facilities Operated by Private Providers
COVID-19 (Coronavirus)
July 20, 2021

The following guidance is based on the most current Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) recommendations for the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. This guidance is not intended to address every potential scenario that may arise as this event evolves.

Guidance for visitation to residential facilities operated by private providers

- Each residential facility will fully implement family visitation with appropriate safety precautions.
- Each facility will develop their own internal protocol/procedures for mask requirements, screening of visitors and staff, and number of people allowed during campus visits. DCS continues to encourage all providers to follow the latest CDC and TN Department of Health guidance when developing requirements. The following are questions may be taken into consideration when developing protocols for visitation:
  - Have you been exposed to anyone who has been tested for COVID-19? If so, have results been received? If no, then visitation will not be scheduled until a confirmation of negative results received.
  - Have you been exposed to anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19? If so, visitation will not be permitted unless it has been more than 10 days since last contact with that individual, or 7 days and you have had a negative test on day 6 or later.
  - In the past 72 hours have you experienced any of the COVID-19 related symptoms identified by the CDC? (fever, chills, fatigue, headache, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, muscle/body aches, loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea). If so, visitation will not be scheduled.

Guidance for DCS staff making visits with youth in provider facilities

- For youth placed in a Congregate Care setting, DCS FSWs will make face to face visits in facilities. The FSW/JSW should contact the provider prior to conducting the visit to determine if the facility has any active COVID cases. IF there are active COVID cases within the facility, the FSW/JSW should discuss with their supervisor to determine next steps.
- When DCS staff make face-to-visits at a facility, staff must follow the provider’s guidelines as it relates to masks, screening questions and other COVID related protocols.
- DCS will continue to utilize videoconferencing to meet visitation requirements ONLY when there are active cases of COVID in a facility and the health department has restricted visitors; This will be determined based on consultation with the DCS worker, DCS supervisor after conversation with the facility.

Guidance regarding transportation of youth

- If youth must be transported for court appearances, medical exams, or other essential appointments, the department strongly urges sanitizing the vehicles before and after transportsations occur.
- Youth and staff are encouraged to wear mask during transportation to appointments and court appearances.
Guidance regarding week-end home passes and family visits

- Parent/Child and Sibling Visits will occur face to face as prescribed by policy and the Contract Provider Manual. Additional visits are encouraged and can be done by videoconferencing.
- Home passes for D&N cases will occur based on policy and procedure requirements.

Guidance for provider staff to consider when providing services by face to face and video conferencing

- For youth placed in private provider foster homes, private provider agency staff will make all required visits in accordance with the Contract Provider Manual and/or policy.
- For youth placed on a Trial Home Visit and being served by a private provider agency, the agency staff will visit the youth in their home and provide all required services outlined in the Contract Provider Manual and/or policy.
- Video conferencing will be allowed ONLY when there are active cases of COVID in the household; This will be determined based on consultation with the DCS worker, DCS supervisor and provider.

Guidance on reporting

Congregate Care Facilities

1. Aggregate data collection on testing and positives of custodial youth and staff: A designated person at each conglomerate care facility will complete this Formstack by 5 pm daily:
   https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/covid19_reporting_for_congregate_care_providers
2. Custodial youth data collection: The provider will notify Camille Legins, Dr Deborah Lowen, and Mary Katherine Fortner within 4 hours after learning that any youth has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Mary Katherine Fortner and Camille Legins will continue to work with the congregate care facility to obtain the names, dates, and test results of the affected youth.

Custodial Youth in a Private Provider Foster Home

1. Upon being informed that a custodial youth has been diagnosed* with COVID-19, within 4 hours the Private Provider Agency designee must follow this link and complete the Formstack:
   https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/covid19_reporting_for_foster_youth_in_a_foster_home_settings
   - The Private Provider Agency must notify the child’s FSW or TL of the positive result.
   - The DCS Regional Nurse must be notified by the child’s FSW or TL as soon as possible to initiate contact and monitor the youth’s health.
   - Birth parent(s)/guardian must be notified - if applicable and possible - of the infection, and documentation of that notification must be entered into TFACTS.

2. Upon being informed that a person living in a Private Provider foster home has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the Private Provider Agency designee must follow this link and complete this Formstack:
   https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/covid_19_reporting_for_foster_parents
   - The Private Provider Agency must notify the FSW or TL of all foster children in the home about the positive result.
   - Birth parent(s)/guardian of all foster youth in the home must be notified - if applicable and possible - about the exposure to COVID-19 and plans for testing and/or monitoring. That
notification should be documented in TFACTS, without specifying the identity of the COVID-19 positive individual.

**Guidance for COVID-19 vaccination**

Foster parents and other care providers are entrusted with authority and responsibility for the daily upbringing and care of children in their care consistent with the child’s individualized circumstances and in consultation with the child’s medical provider, including routine authority for matters such as well-care treatment, vaccination, vision, and hearing.