Guidance for DCS Staff
COVID-19 (Coronavirus)
Updated July 1, 2020

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 may be updated at any time as more information is available. This guidance is not intended to address every potential scenario that may arise as this event evolves.

Guidance for employees at Wilder Youth Development Center and Child Abuse Hotline.

- All staff at the Hotline who are not working from home will be required to complete a daily health questionnaire prior to each shift.
- Following guidance from the CDC, COVID-19 symptom and temperature checks will be conducted on all employees at Wilder and other essential personnel (such as attorneys visiting youth and contract nurses) prior to entry into Wilder. Per CDC guidelines, those running a temperature of 100.4 or higher will not be permitted to enter Wilder. DCS has also suspended visitors to Wilder and all facilities except for attorneys and medical personnel.
- Employees who refuse to follow the guidance will not be allowed to enter the facility and will be required to use personal leave for the missed shift.

Guidance for employees making face-to-face home visits.

- Until further notice DCS may utilize videoconferencing to meet visitation requirements unless there are safety concerns, no video capability, or other circumstances that warrant a face-to-face.
- Procedures on conducting face to face videoconferencing are posted in a separate document.
- Face-to-face visits will continue for all initial CPS visits.
- For scheduled visits, staff should call the family home in advance of the visit to complete the following health questionnaire with the family to determine risk based upon the most recent TDH guidance and CDC COVID-19 symptoms list.
  a. Have you had contact within the last fourteen days with any person under investigation for COVID-19, or with anyone with known or suspected COVID-19?
  b. Have you been exposed to anyone who has been tested for COVID-19? If so, have results been received? If no results received, then visitation will not be permitted.
  c. In the past 72 hours have you had nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, cough, sore throat, fever over 100.4, chills, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose?
Guidance for employees making face-to-face visits with youth in DCS or provider facilities.

- DCS will continue to utilize videoconferencing to meet visitation requirements unless there are safety concerns, no video capability, or other circumstances that warrant a face-to-face visit.
- When DCS staff make face-to-visits at the facility, staff must wear mask as well as follow all CDC and TDH guidelines and any provider guidelines will be followed.
- For the period between the issuance of this document and July 31, 2020, regions should limit the number of staff visiting facilities to the extent feasible by assigning multiple visits to one individual when visits are required.

Guidance on reporting

- Staff will immediately report to Deputy Commissioner Sandra Wilson and to Executive Director of Child Health Dr. Deborah Lowen if any visitors to a DCS office have been exposed to, exhibit symptoms of, have been tested positive for COVID-19. This includes children, parents, foster parents and DCS staff.

Guidance regarding court appearances

- From the date of this document through the end of July 31, 2020, if the child/youth has a pending court date, DCS staff should check with the DCS attorney assigned to the case to ensure that the court date has not been re-scheduled.

Guidance for visitors in DCS offices.

- All visitors should complete a health questionnaire to determine risk prior to visitations or meetings. No more than two visitors at a time should be “scheduled” for an office visit.
  
  a. Have you had contact within the last fourteen days with any person under investigation for COVID-19, or with anyone with known or suspected COVID-19?
  b. Have you been exposed to anyone who has been tested for COVID-19? If so, have results been received? If no results received, then visitation will not be permitted.
  c. In the past 72 hours have you had nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, cough, sore throat, fever over 100.4, chills, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose?

Guidance for travel.

- Non-essential staff out-of-state travel has been suspended until after July 31, 2020 - will determine at that time whether the suspension needs to be extended.
- Essential travel has not been affected at this time.
- Out of state travel request for foster children should be reviewed by Regional Administrator/JJ
Director, then forwarded to Debbie Miller (Debbie.Miller@tn.gov) for final approval or denial.

Guidance for meetings.

- If you have been pre-approved to attend any conferences or out-of-state meetings, please check with your Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner or Executive Director for further instruction.
- Large group meetings (10 or more participants) will be suspended or rescheduled as a WebEx meeting until further notice. All in person meetings must follow the social distancing guidelines as well as all participants must wear mask or facial coverings.
- Non-essential trainings will be cancelled or rescheduled as a WebEx meeting until further notice.
- New Employee Orientations and Pre-service will continue under guidelines issued by the Training Division.

General guidance for staff.

Staff should follow these guidelines set forth by the TN Department of Health:

Everyone Should:
- **Keep hands clean**
  - Wash with soap and water for 20 seconds several times per day OR sanitize hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol
  - Avoid touching the eyes and face with unwashed hands

- **Avoid close contact**
  - Put six feet of distance between yourself and others, when possible

- **Cover mouth and nose with a mask or homemade cloth face cover when around others**
  - A cloth face covering helps to protect others from you
  - N-95 and surgical face masks are not necessary for public interactions
  - Do NOT place face coverings on children younger than age 2 or unconscious individuals
  - Use of a face mask does NOT replace frequent hand washing

- **Cover coughs and sneezes and immediately wash or sanitize hands**

- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces throughout the day**
  - Remember doorknobs and handles, light switches, phones, faucets and sinks

Links to Tennessee Department of Health Guidance

[General Guidance and Use of PPE by Non-Medical](#)
[Close Contact Guidelines](#)
[Case Guidelines](#)