

Group, Shelter, PMIC, RBSCCL and Juvenile Detention Guidance in Response to COVID-19

March 17, 2020

The following guidance is based on the most current Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) guidance. The health and safety of children, family, staff and administrators are of the utmost importance. This guidance is not intended to address every potential scenario that may arise as this event evolves.

Mitigation practices must begin for ALL staff involved in residential settings and other social work practices requiring face-to-face contact with clients:

Implement common-sense practices for preventing disease spread, such as: covering a cough, staying home when sick, and washing hands.

Managing Staff Shift Rotation

1. All staff with a physical presence in the residential facilities should be advised that they should not report for work if they are sick.
2. All staff should have their temperature taken prior to beginning their shift. Anyone with a temperature over 100.4 degrees should not be in work status.

Family Visitation and Other Visitors to Facility

1. In-person family visitation will be discontinued immediately.
2. Family visits should be held via electronic platform, such as FaceTime or Skype.
3. Limited exceptions will be made if a particular youth is experiencing extreme emotional distress due to in-person family visitation being discontinued. These exceptions must be sent to Kristen Konchalski. Director Garcia will make the final determination.
4. Prior to allowing entrance into the physical space of a residential setting, the temperature of the visitor should be taken. Anyone with a fever must not be permitted to enter.
5. Visitors must also wash hands or use hand sanitizer before they will be allowed in. Visits must occur in an isolated area, not a common area.

Physical Environment

1. Keep hand sanitizer and encourage use by youth and all staff members.
2. Ensure soap dispensers are full.
3. Ensure signage in the bathroom and other areas that encourage good hygiene, such as hand washing.
4. Discourage any items being passed during meetings.
5. Remind youth and staff members to avoid touching their face or hair.
6. Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with warm, soapy water regularly.
7. Frequent cleaning with disinfectant agents on all high-contact areas – including countertops, tables, computers, etc.

New Admissions and Youth already Admitted

1. All youth referred to admission must have a temperature screening done at time of admission. If they have a temperature, the youth must be physically isolated in a single-use room if that is available.
2. All youth with a fever and cough should be masked.
3. All youth should have their temperature taken daily and the data logged by staff.

Employee Health: Residential settings must be flexible with staff who report illness or are caring for ill family members. We recommend contingency plans for staff shortages. If residential settings are experiencing a staff shortage that will impact the ability to meet staff: youth ratios, this should be communicated to the contract specialist and program manager immediately.

If you become aware of any confirmed or presumptively positive case, please notify the DHS or JCS referring worker, your supervisor and Kristin Konchalski, Program Manager over Residential Services.