



Office of Children and Family Services

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Governor

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Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Executive Officers and Executive Directors of Voluntary Agency Residential Programs, and Executive Directors of Domestic Violence Programs

FROM: Lisa Gharthey Ogundimu, Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Welfare and Community Services

DATE: March 18, 2020

SUBJECT: Guidance for Isolation or Quarantine

Purpose:

The following guidance for residential programs and domestic violence shelters licensed or certified by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is based on the most current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and NYS Department of Health (DOH) recommendations for prevention of the spread of the novel coronavirus of 2019 disease (COVID-19) and the management of Persons Under Investigation (PUI) for COVID-19. Specific guidance for isolation or quarantine protocol, including required notification, is documented below.

Please review this information, including the links below, with your program's leadership and staff and make any necessary adjustments to your program policies and protocols in response to this rapidly evolving health crisis. Congregate facilities are especially at risk for the spread of communicable diseases due to the number of individuals living in proximity to one another. Program operators must take steps to minimize the risk of an outbreak of COVID-19.

OCFS encourages residential programs and domestic violence shelters to monitor the websites for New York State Department of Health (DOH) and your respective local health department (LHD) for new information about COVID-19. Additionally, we urge you to remain in close contact with your OCFS regional office staff who have been instructed to immediately elevate COVID-19 questions and concerns.

Isolation or Quarantine Protocol:

Based on the recommendations of the local health department (LHD), the program will either quarantine or isolate a resident or transfer them to a place identified by the LHD.

Asymptomatic quarantined residents may not share a room or space with residents who are symptomatic and in isolation.

Where professional medical staff are available to train or supervise the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), consistent with CDC guidelines (links included below) for droplet precautions, such PPE should be made available for staff who must supervise a resident who is either quarantined or isolated. Protective equipment may include:

- Gloves
- Gown
- Goggles
- Masks

Each facility is encouraged to identify a separate bathroom to be used exclusively by residents and staff who are either quarantined, or isolated, in the event that quarantine or isolation becomes necessary. If a resident who is quarantined or isolated needs to move through the program to use the appropriate bathroom, staff should provide the resident with a mask to prevent spread of infection.

The bathroom identified for use by either quarantined or isolated residents must be disinfected a minimum of twice daily.

Residents should remain in isolation or quarantine until the LHD deems such isolation or quarantine is no longer required.

Required Notification:

In the event that residents or staff are identified as potentially having been in contact with someone who is known to have COVID-19, or is a PUI, notifications of this occurrence should be made by staff through their internal chain of command. New York State law requires that the program must report all cases to the local health department (LHD). Additionally, the program must report all cases to the appropriate OCFS regional office staff, and, if the individual being quarantined/isolated is a child, to the parent and/or legal custodian of the child.

Precautions:

Programs should take reasonable precautions regarding the number of contacts a youth or shelter resident makes with others and establish protocols to limit the potential spread of COVID-19. All staff/providers should follow the CDC's guidelines for infection control basics including hand hygiene:

- [Infection Control Basics: https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/index.html)
- [Hand Hygiene in Health Care Settings: https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/](https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/)
- [Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives: https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html)

There are several helpful resources available to the public to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

These include, but are not limited to:

- NYSDOH 24/7 hotline: **1-888-364-3065**
- NYSDOH Website: <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>
- CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>
- CDC Infection Control Basics: <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/index.html>

- CDC Personal Protective Equipment Guidelines:
<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/index.html>

Please contact your OCFS program lead or regional office if you have any questions. Thank you for the work you do every day and your dedication to the children and families of New York State.

CC: Local Department of Social Services Commissioners
Renee Hallock, Associate Commissioner
David L. Bach, Associate Commissioner
Barbara Green-Flood, Director of Regional Operations
OCFS Regional Office Directors