

# HCJFS

## Letter Series

**Director's Letter:** 74  
**Subject:** Provision of Services during a Pandemic Outbreak  
**Effective Date:** Immediately  
**This Letter Obsoletes:** None  
**This Letter Approved By:** Tim McCartney  
**Approval Date:** 3/11/2020

<b>Policy</b>	<p>In collaboration with the County Commissioners, other local, state, and federal agencies, HCJFS will take every precaution to provide a safe working environment for all employees and clients.</p> <p>The following responsibilities and procedures will be implemented when advised to by a Public Health Department, the State of Ohio, or the County Commissioners. The HCJFS Director, or their designee, can also enact these procedures at their discretion.</p> <p>A tiered system will be used to escalate HCJFS' response to a pandemic outbreak. The tiered system is designed to ensure the adequate delivery of services, to protect staff and clients, and to respond appropriately to a quickly changing pandemic outbreak.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan A: Offices Open to the Public / Increased Sanitization &amp; Prevention Measures</li> <li>• Plan B: Offices Closed to the Public / Staff Report as Scheduled</li> <li>• Plan C: Offices Closed / Emergency Remote Operations</li> </ul>
<b>All Staff Responsibilities</b>	<p><b>At all times, HCJFS Employees are expected to practice common health and wellness activities to ensure the health and safety of clients and co-workers.</b> These practices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds under running water (Use at least 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available);</li> <li>• Using tissues and elbows to contain coughs and sneezes (immediate disposal of tissues after use);</li> <li>• Maintaining clean and orderly workstations and offices;</li> <li>• Utilizing sick time as appropriate, necessary, and available (stay home for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever or signs of a fever without use of fever-reducing medicines).</li> <li>• Adhere to the procedures and responsibilities described below.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication of Pandemic Outbreak</b>	<p>HCJFS will use the Employee Emergency Alert system to notify staff of a pandemic outbreak. This communication will detail staff procedures and expected actions.</p>
<b>Sick Time Balances</b>	<p>HCJFS employees are expected to stay home if their symptoms are consistent with the current pandemic outbreak (themselves or dependents). Staff must communicate with their supervisor about sick time needs. Sick leave policies will be consistent with public health guidance and made in consultation with local and state officials.</p>

## Plan A: Offices Open to the Public / Increased Sanitization and Prevention Measures

<b>Plan A: Offices Open to the Public</b>	<p>Plan A is designed to maintain normal working operations while also activating staff to enhance preventative measures.</p> <p>Incoming calls will be received and responded to as normal. The agency will maintain the same level of service and respond to calls meeting the required federal and state mandates.</p>
<b>Staff Responsibilities</b>	<p><b>All Staff Responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow normal prevention procedures (above)</li><li>• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth</li><li>• Avoid shaking hands and other physical contact</li><li>• Clean personal workspaces with disposable wipes or cleaners</li><li>• Limit meetings and face-to-face interaction / Use e-mail and phone</li><li>• Limit non-essential travel</li><li>• Avoid socialization in groups</li><li>• Maintain healthy habits (adequate sleep, healthy eating, exercise, stress management, etc.)</li><li>• All cleaning and sanitation efforts are appreciated. Staff are responsible for their own workstations and may use personal household cleaning products.</li></ul> <p><b>Administration Responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicate staff responsibilities and expectations</li><li>• Communicate with the public, ODJFS, Local Media, County Administration, and OIS Service Desk</li><li>• Ensure normal operations</li></ul> <p><b>Section Chief Responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicate staff expectations.</li><li>• Ensure the Key Staff are aware, identified, and healthy.</li><li>• Update the <a href="#">HCJFS 1285 – HCJFS Section Contingency Plan</a> based on current information.</li><li>• Communicate Key Staff to Information Systems.</li><li>• Ensure normal business operations.</li><li>• Direct staff and supervisors to assist with sanitization efforts by wiping down shared office equipment, door handles, and client-facing areas such as front desks, scanning stations, etc.</li></ul> <p>Building Services will provide disposable wipes and cleaning products to staff working in areas with high public traffic, such as reception desks, payment windows, and meeting rooms such as family conference rooms and visitation rooms.</p>
<b>Special Accommodations</b>	<p>Staff with an increased risk of illness (i.e., pre-existing conditions or other factors) should discuss their accommodation needs with Human Resources.</p>
<b>Information Systems</b>	<p>In preparation for possible agency closure, Information Systems must ensure that key staff have appropriate remote access to state systems and the local network. Information Systems must also implement procedures to ensure all systems, servers, and backups are fully operational.</p>

## Plan A: Offices Open to the Public / Increased Sanitization and Prevention Measures (cont.)

<b>Building Services</b>	<p>Building Services is responsible for ensuring building cleanliness and for conducting a thorough building sanitization each night of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All common and reception areas including floors, reception desks, common phones, seating, and shared office equipment and kiosks</li><li>• All elevators: buttons, doors, handrails</li><li>• All common entry doors including handles</li><li>• All bathrooms and kitchenettes: all surfaces, handles, and equipment (<i>Note: Staff are responsible for insides of refrigerators, microwaves, and coffee pots.</i>)</li><li>• All car seats</li><li>• All visitation rooms</li><li>• All shared conference and meeting rooms</li></ul>
<b>Reception and Payment Areas</b>	<p>Staff working reception desks and payment windows are expected to assist in the day-to-day cleanliness and sanitation of common areas. Staff are expected to maintain a high level of service and are encouraged to take additional preventative measures. Staff in these areas will be provided with cleaning supplies.</p> <p>Building Services will provide staff working in reception and payment areas with protective supplies consistent with public health guidance.</p> <p>Staff must use their discretion when providing service to obviously sick clients for the overall health of all parties. In consultation with a supervisor, staff may ask clients to leave the building and to self-quarantine at home until they are feeling better and are symptom free.</p>
<b>Client Hearing and Eligibility Interviews</b>	<p>Whenever possible, hearings and eligibility interviews must be conducted via phone or rescheduled for after the pandemic has resolved.</p>
<b>Building Notices</b>	<p>HCJFS Administration will post building notices on all exterior doors informing the public of enhanced sanitation and prevention measures.</p> <p>The building notice must include requesting the public's cooperation and that staff may ask sick persons to leave the premises and to self-quarantine at home. The building notice must include applicable phone numbers for all program areas.</p>
<b>Client Files</b>	<p>Using OnBase and e-mail effectively reduces physical transfer of files and related documentation. All staff must utilize OnBase and e-mail to share documentation whenever possible.</p>
<b>Field Operations</b>	<p>Building Services will provide staff with field responsibilities (Children's Services workers, CCMEP case workers, APS workers, etc.) with protective supplies consistent with public health guidance.</p> <p>Children's Services workers must follow policies and procedures for children in care to ensure their health and well-being.</p> <p>In non-emergency situations, field staff may choose to leave situations where they feel they are at risk of exposure to a pandemic illness. Supervisors should be notified immediately, and the appointment must be rescheduled for a later date.</p> <p>For Children's Services staff in the field, Child Safety must always be ensured.</p>

## Plan B: Offices Closed to Public

<b>Plan B: Offices Closed to Public</b>	<p>Plan B is designed to ensure adequate and consistent service provision, while limiting face-to-face interaction with the public. Staff should report to work as scheduled. All sanitation and preparation procedures implemented for Plan A are to remain in effect through Plan B.</p> <p>Incoming calls will be received and responded to as normal. The agency will maintain the same level of service and respond to calls meeting the required federal and state mandates.</p> <p><b>All face-to-face interviews, appointments, and meetings scheduled to take place at a JFS facility must be cancelled. Staff hosting meetings are responsible for cancelling the appointment with outside partners, clients, etc. Staff cannot attend off-site non-essential meetings. Staff should consult with their Supervisor as needed.</b></p> <p>Per State requirements, HCJFS must continue mandated services unless otherwise directed.</p> <p>Whenever possible, children's services visits will be conducted outside of the agency using kinship or foster homes, birth family homes, or an alternative site. Any visitation that requires agency supervision at a JFS facility will be suspended until further notice. All cancelled visitation will be rescheduled at the earliest convenience.</p>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<p><b>All Staff Responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow normal prevention procedures (above)</li><li>• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth</li><li>• Avoid shaking hands and other physical contact</li><li>• Clean personal workspaces with disposable wipes or cleaners</li><li>• Limit meetings and face-to-face interaction / Use e-mail and phone</li><li>• Limit non-essential travel</li><li>• Avoid socialization in groups</li><li>• Maintain healthy habits (adequate sleep, healthy eating, exercise, stress management, etc.)</li><li>• All cleaning and sanitation efforts are appreciated. Staff are responsible for their own workstations and may use personal household cleaning products.</li></ul> <p><b>Administration Responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicate staff responsibilities and expectations</li><li>• Communicate with the public, ODJFS, Local Media, County Administration, and OIS Service Desk</li></ul> <p><b>Section Chief Responsibilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicate staff expectations</li><li>• Ensure Section Contingency Plans and Key Staff are aware, identified, and healthy. Update the Plan based on current information.</li><li>• Communicate Key Staff to Information Systems</li><li>• Direct staff and supervisors to assist with sanitization efforts by wiping down shared office equipment, door handles, and client-facing areas such as front desks, scanning stations, etc.</li><li>• Increase staff phone coverage to accommodate an increase in call volume.</li></ul> <p>All cleaning and sanitation efforts are appreciated. Staff are responsible for their workstation. HCJFS will work to provide disposable wipes and cleaning products. Staff may use personal household cleaning products at their workstation.</p>

## Plan B: Offices Closed to Public (cont.)

<b>Building Notices</b>	<p>HCJFS Administration will post building notices on all exterior doors informing the public of building closure to the public.</p> <p>The building notice must include applicable phone numbers for all program areas.</p> <p>A drop box will be utilized for all payments. A building notice will be posted to alert the public that all payments must be placed in the drop box. A separate drop box will also be utilized for all incoming paperwork.</p>
<b>Field Operations</b>	<p>Building Services will provide staff with field responsibilities (children's services workers, CCMEP case workers, APS workers, etc.) with protective supplies consistent with public health guidance.</p> <p>Children's Services workers must follow policies and procedures for children in care to ensure their health and well-being.</p> <p>In non-emergency situations, field staff may choose to leave situations where they feel they are at risk of exposure to a pandemic illness. Supervisors should be notified immediately, and the appointment must be rescheduled for a later date.</p> <p>For Children's Services staff in the field, Child Safety must always be ensured.</p> <p>Mail will be picked up as usual at the local Post Office and dropped nightly in the receptacle. Special care will be taken by staff handling incoming and outgoing mail, utilizing sterile gloves to prevent further risk of exposure.</p>

## Plan C: Office Closed

<b>Plan C: Office Closed</b>	<p>Upon approval from the County Board of Commissioners, the building will be closed to the public and all non-essential staff. Business will be conducted remotely where possible by identified essential and non-essential staff. Notice will be provided to staff using the Employee Emergency Alert System.</p> <p>Per State requirements, HCJFS must continue mandated services unless otherwise directed.</p>
<b>Public Notice</b>	<p>HCJFS Administration will post building notices on all exterior doors informing the public of building closure.</p> <p>The main HCJFS phone line (946-1000) will notify the public of the closure and alternative methods to request services.</p> <p>A drop box will be utilized for all payments. A building notice will be posted to alert the public that all payments must be placed in the drop box. A separate drop box will also be utilized for all incoming paperwork.</p>
<b>Remote Access</b>	<p>Staff with remote access are expected to work remotely during business hours unless they are ill or caring for a sick dependent. Normal call-in procedures for illness must be practiced.</p>
<b>Field Operations</b>	<p>Building Services will provide staff with field responsibilities (Children's Services workers, CCMEP case workers, APS workers, etc.) with protective supplies consistent with public health guidance.</p> <p>Children's Services workers must follow policies and procedures for children in care to ensure their health and well-being.</p> <p>In non-emergency situations, field staff may choose to leave situations where they feel they are at risk of exposure to a pandemic illness. Supervisors should be notified immediately, and the appointment must be rescheduled for a later date.</p> <p>For Children's Services staff in the field, Child Safety must always be ensured.</p>