

From: JFS APS_Mailbox

Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2020 6:07 PM

Subject: Mandates Concerning Visits with Adults alleged to have been Abused/Neglected/Exploited

Importance: High

Hello APS County Contacts,

As you are aware, Governor DeWine has declared a State of Emergency for Ohio due to issues related to coronavirus (COVID-19). Because of this, many large group activities sponsored by ODJFS and travel by state staff have been cancelled or postponed. There will also be some changes in how small meetings are held (e.g., they will be held via teleconference, Skype, etc.); and, communication via telephone and email are the preferred ways of holding discussion. *Our offices are still open during regular business hours.*

The state APS staff has received several inquiries regarding directives or guidance related to the work of our county partners as they serve the vulnerable older adults in our communities. We understand your concerns for the safety of staff and those they work with; and we are very concerned with limiting the spread of viral illness. However, at this time, there have been no directives issued related to visiting with clients other than those listed in the OAC. The mandates of the OAC remain in place, even for those alleged victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation who may be in hospital or another temporary placement. Attempting/conducting a face-to-face visit within the prescribed timelines is still very important. The OAC speaks to the timeframes surrounding initial face-to-face visits related to reports of adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation --

5101:2-20-11 Adult protective services screening.

(D)

(1) Emergency reports shall be initiated within twenty-four hours from receipt of the report.

(2) Non-emergency reports shall be initiated within three working days from the receipt of the report.

We understand the concern that workers may have regarding visiting people who are ill, and can offer the following suggestions. Workers who need to visit with someone who is hospitalized or in nursing care should contact the facility to see if the patient can have visitors. If they are not quarantined, then normal preventive measures should be taken by the worker. Please remind staff to continue preventative measures such as washing hands often with soap and water; avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands; avoid close contact with people who are sick; stay home when sick; and cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue and then throwing the tissue in the trash.

The Ohio Department of Health has opened a call center to answer questions regarding coronavirus. The call center is open 7 days a week from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and can be reached at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634). Call center staff includes licensed nurses and infectious disease experts. They will be available to answer questions and provide accurate information about COVID-19, the risk to the public, and the state's

response. The Ohio Department of Health's coronavirus.ohio.gov offers great information and will remain updated with the most current guidance available.

Please let us know if you have further questions, and thank you for the work that you do!

Enjoy your Day!

Heidi Turner-Stone

Section Chief - Adult Protective Services

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

(614) 387-8933