



Coronavirus (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions
Updated: March 12, 2020

SNAP/TANF

Q1. Will work participation requirements be relaxed in light of the recommended social distancing measures?

A. We understand your concerns. All states are faced with this issue, and the Governor has expressed his intention to seek broad flexibility at the federal level during this time. We are working with the administration on this and will provide updates as they come.

Q2. Is ODJFS taking steps to help food-insecure and homeless individuals – for example, by paying for food delivery for SNAP recipients?

A. At the moment, federal rules prohibit online grocery shopping, although USDA is conducting a pilot.

Q3. Is there any talk of suspending SNAP recertifications or interim reports, to reduce county call volume during times of staff reduction?

A. Please see the response to Question 1.

Q4. Indiana has temporarily waived the State Plan requirement that prohibits pre-packaging/pre-bagging of TEFAP commodities. Is Ohio going to follow suit?

A. Ohio already allows the pre-packaging of TEFAP commodities. We encourage choice model pantries to eliminate waste, but we don't specifically restrict this option. A waiver is not necessary for this in Ohio.

Q5. What if county workers work from home and have no access to the state system to get the RMS notifications. Will that be an issue?

A. The RMS system is web-based so if they have access to their email to see that they have a notification, then they should be able to go into the system and complete the notification. If they can't access their email or the system, then the county RMS coordinator can complete the "hit" for the worker. However, they would have to contact the worker at home to see what they were working on.

Q6. Will there be any kind of RMS accommodation if agencies shut down or have many people out sick?

A. At this time, we do not anticipate that an accommodation would be necessary. We over-sample during a quarter as a standard practice. However, we will monitor this as we go forward.

Child Care

Q1. If a school is closed due to the virus, can child care providers use the “school out of session” attendance designation in the Time, Attendance, and Payment system? Can county agencies adjust the maximum number of hours of a child’s PFCC authorization?

A. Yes, providers can use the “school out of session” designation if this occurs. However, families – not programs – should contact the county agency about making any changes to their authorizations.

Q2. Will children be allowed more PFCC absent days if they are quarantined? Will programs receive some type of reimbursement if a town is quarantined and they cannot operate?

A. We continue to explore options to assist in these circumstances.

Q3. Can organizations that provide training to child care providers offer that training online or via videoconference instead of in person? If not, could the training be delayed?

A. Child Care already allows online training for most courses, with the exception of CPR training.

Q4. What bleach water guidelines should child care programs follow? ODJFS’s or the CDCs? The ODJFS recommendation is 1/4 cup of bleach and 1 gallon of water for a strong bleach solution and 1 tablespoon bleach and 1 gallon of water for a weak bleach solution. The CDC recommendation is 1/3 cup bleach and 1 gallon of water for a strong bleach solution and 4 teaspoons of bleach and 1 gallon of water a weak bleach solution.

A. The Ohio Administrative Code states that providers must use a commercial product registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a sanitizer and to follow the manufacturer’s instructions. Providers following the CDC guidance would be considered in compliance with the Ohio Administrative Code.

Child and Adult Protective Services

Q1. Will information be provided for foster parents, child care providers, or other substitute caregivers?

A. We encourage you to remind foster parents, child care providers, and other substitute caregivers to visit coronavirus.ohio.gov for up-to-date information and more specific guidance. They also can call the Ohio Department of Health hotline at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634) 7 days a week from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. In addition, please see the attached guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Children’s Bureau.

Q2. Will visitation protocols be changed for child and adult protective services?

A. As it pertains to required contacts and supervised visitation, we continue to evaluate this on a routine basis but have not formally adjusted any protocols at the state level.

County agencies should use their own executive-level discretion to make decisions and adjust caseworker activities as necessary on a case-by-case basis and document those decisions. They also should utilize their local COOP and EMA protocols and guidance to respond to county-specific responses to crisis.

We have heard of some residential centers already limiting visitors and offering telecommunication options. For example, one facility has communicated that they are taking extra precautions for caseworker visits and requiring all visits to be scheduled in advance. That facility has provided the following guidance:

- *Caseworkers will also have to be checked in by our nursing department before visiting your client. They will be checking and asking the following questions:*
 - *Temperature greater than or equal to 100.4 (WE WILL CHECK YOUR TEMP)*
 - *Cough*
 - *Shortness of Breath*
 - *Runny Nose*
 - *Any Recent Travel out of state/ country*
- *If you are found to have any of these symptoms, please follow your agencies guidelines to send another representative in your place.*
- *We have designated areas to accommodate your visits.*
- *We apologize for the any inconvenience and thank you for your cooperation in keeping our client's health and well-being a priority.*

Q3. Are there any alternatives or waivers that county PCSAs can invoke regarding out-of-state visits, particularly those that involve staff flying to another state?

A. When an Ohio PCSA (or PCPA) places a child in an out-of-state placement, those placements must go through the ICPC approval process. The ICPC requires authorities at either the local agency (if the child was placed in a foster home) or residential facility in the state in which the child was placed to conduct the monitoring/visiting. There is no requirement for Ohio PCSA staff to travel to other states to personally conduct monitoring, visits, or face-to-face contact with children placed out-of-state. Although many PCSAs continue to conduct their own visitation and monitoring of children out of state as a best practice, that is not required. (MM)

General Information

Q1. Is there information available about how best to disinfect a public facility?

A. Yes. You can find guidance on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html>.

Q2. Will the state provide funding for cleaning and sanitation supplies, or purchase bulk quantities of supplies that could be distributed to counties?

A. At this point no, but we may consider doing so in the future.

Q3. Do public meeting laws allow virtual meetings to be held in place of in-person meetings?

A. We are researching this issue. To the extent that you have the flexibility to meet virtually, we encourage you to do that and follow Governor DeWine's lead in undertaking reasonable social distancing measures for the next several weeks. Postpone large in-person meetings if you can, and encourage employees to maximize use of phone conferences, video conferences, webinars and email to conduct business as much as possible.

Q4. If state staff are stationed in a non-state-owned building that closes because of the coronavirus, where should they report for work?

A. The department has a Continuity of Operations Plan that determines where state employees should report for work in the event of facility closures. We will ensure all staff know their alternate work locations.

Q5. Is the Ohio Department of Health sharing information with county health departments?

A. Yes, they are. We encourage county agencies and local workforce development boards to work closely with their county health departments. For local contact information, visit <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/find-local-health-districts>.

Q6. Can the state help with technology to allow county staff to work from home, if needed?

A. We are currently evaluating that option.

For up-to-date information about COVID-19, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov or call the Ohio Department of Health hotline at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).