

The Department will be posting other Department COVID-19-related information, including a series of Q&As on the COVID-19 page on our website www.nd.gov/dhs/ to help ensure that various partner and provider groups have up-to-date information on recommended practices as well as program and policy changes.

Regional Human Service Centers

- Continue open for services, not refusing admission
- Restricting visitors at all residential facilities
- Limiting visitors to all clinics
- Daily Screening of staff and clients to begin Monday, 3/23/2020
- Eliminated social crowding by limiting volume of clients and staff to no more than 10 in any one area
- Increasing telehealth services to promote, when possible, remote services that allow social distancing
- Offering some counseling services off site at residential settings, further reducing social congestion within the clinic setting
- Promoting hand hygiene to clients and staff
- Crisis services continue without change

North Dakota State Hospital

- Open for services, not refusing admission
- Remain closed to all visitors
- Screening all staff and patients daily for exposure to COVID-19 and fever
- Exercising staff self-quarantine based on current recommendations from CDC and DOH
- Additional sanitation and personal protective equipment ordered
- Eliminated social crowding by limiting volume of patients and staff to no more than 10 in any one area and separating all forms of seating
- Isolation and quarantine areas identified and ready
- Daily education to staff and patients to help alleviate anxiety and keep informed
- Hospital wide disinfecting procedures completed daily

Behavioral Health Division

- Offers resources to support the behavioral health of North Dakotans at www.behaviorahealth.nd.gov/covid-19.
- Offers age-appropriate resources to help adults talk with children about COVID-19 at www.parentslead.org.
- Provided guidance to SUD Voucher providers on tele-health to ensure services continue.
- Worked with Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) to approve blanket exception requests for stable patients up to 28 days, to decrease daily clinic traffic. Provided OTPs with naloxone to give to individuals who are receiving these take-home doses to reduce the risk of overdose deaths.
- Provided guidance to Free Through Recovery (FTR) providers on developing a person-centered plan to navigate engagement during COVID-19.

Medicaid

- Medicaid has applied for an 1135 waiver to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to give the State more flexibility in delivering health care services. The flexibilities would allow for things such as timelier enrollment by out of state providers, utilization of beds in hospitals for treating COVID-19 patients regardless of what they are normally used for and relaxing some regulatory burden on providers.
- In collaboration with the Department of Insurance, Medicaid has relaxed its telemedicine policies to allow for telephone visits that would allow more care to be delivered to members in their homes.

Life Skills and Transition Center

- Open for services, not refusing admission
- Temporarily suspended community outreach services
- Restricting visitors
- Screening clients and staff daily for exposure and fever
- Increased social distancing with changes to treatment and dietary services
- Education to staff and clients to help alleviate anxiety and promote prevention of disease spread

Human Service Zones (formerly known as County Social Services)

- Providing ongoing child protection, foster and economic assistance programs
- Offices are closed to the public but are accepting information via phone, email and fax
- Clients can access the Client Portal on the DHS website to apply for benefits or to submit verification for benefit renewal
- Teams continue to ensure that the essential services are being delivered with little to no disruption

Economic Assistance

- Removed requirements for face to face interviews for SNAP and TANF – there are now no economic assistance programs that require a person to physically come into an office for an eligibility determination
- Allow for all SNAP EBT cards (new and replacement) to be issued via mail
- Modified Child Care Assistance program to ensure that childcare providers receive payment based on a child's enrollment, rather than attendance
- Developed additional resources to help people create their own personal account in the online self-service portal, to further ensure that any eligibility related communication can be completed remotely

Child and Family Services

- Continue to provide background check services to support delivery of services to children, families, older adults and various other vulnerable populations
- Work with courts, human service zones and foster families to help ensure continued service to children who are in an out of home setting

Aging Services

- Draft Appendix K emergency procedures for HCBS 1915(c) Medicaid waiver programs to allow greater flexibility in how home and community-based services are delivered
- Worked with senior meal providers to shift from congregate dining to pre-packaged meals for takeout
- Provided guidance to QSPs and other in-home service providers about continuing to deliver in-home services during the pandemic

Developmental Disabilities

- Drafted Appendix K emergency procedures for HCBS 1915(c) Medicaid waiver programs for Intermediate care and Group facilities serving people with developmental disabilities
- Offered guidance on how to safely conduct in-home services during the pandemic