

The North Dakota Department of Human Services is working together to navigate the risks and concerns with COVID-19. Our desire is to minimize the risk for the individuals that we serve and for employees. The Department is committed to delivering on its mission of serving people in need across the state of North Dakota. We are working diligently to make sure that our team, our partners, and our provider networks remain operational through this public health crisis.

DHS service delivery locations will remain open and will continue to serve clients. This includes the Regional Human Service Centers, State Hospital (Jamestown), and the Life Skills & Transition Center (Grafton). These facilities will continue to provide medically-necessary services, are screening for COVID-19 illness risk, and are monitoring and following recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Department is also working with counties (human service zone offices) across ND to ensure that both county and state employees have the ability to continue to serve community needs.

The outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) can be stressful for community members and employees. The Department is offering resources to support North Dakotans' behavioral health during this time. The information is available online at www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/covid-19. We are also offering new resources to support parents and other adults in having conversations with children about the coronavirus through its Parents Lead program. The information is available online at www.parentslead.org.

The Department also will be posting other Department COVID-19-related information, including a series of Q&As on the COVID-19 page on our website <http://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.

We understand how important it is for people most affected by the instability caused by this public health crisis to have access to resources that can help provide a bridge to more stable times. As such, the Department will work together with its partners across the state to boost outreach efforts related to services and supports that are available to help people who are struggling.

The Department contracts with thousands of providers across ND to provide a myriad of services in homes and community settings as well as in facilities. The Department will continue to provide payment for contracted services according to existing practices, unless a special circumstance is noted. Any modifications in program/policy will be highlighted in the various Q&A documents available at dhs.nd.gov. This will likely change frequently given the situation, and we ask that you regularly check the Q&A documents for your specific area of service.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

GOVERNOR
Doug Burgum

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Christopher Jones

Every community relies on its infrastructure to meet the needs of its residents. We understand today more than ever before that a community's infrastructure includes not only the physical components of transportation and utility systems, but also the social components of housing, child care, employment, education, and a thriving business community that can provide the things that people need to live the life they choose to live, where they choose to live it. Supporting the healthy development of social infrastructure requires as much intentional focus as does the development of physical infrastructure.

People are the heart of community. Supporting people through the range of life events and life stages that all of us experience helps ensure that people living in a community have choice, are able to contribute, and are able to live their lives as fully-engaged members of their community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Jones', is positioned above the typed name.

Chris Jones
Executive Director
Department of Human Services