

April 3, 2020

#### HVSA Home Visiting Programs –

This week marks another week in the history books, with infections of COVID-19 exceeding 6,000 cases in Washington State. Despite this, we also see unprecedented efforts and approaches to support home visiting teams and families in your community. We learned this week that programs continue to receive referrals and utilize adaptive strategies to engage existing families and enroll new families all to support healthy families and great childhoods.

This week also marks the beginning of [Child Abuse Prevention Month](#). The work you do directly supports strong and resilient families and reduces the likelihood that a child will experience maltreatment. To celebrate this month, DCYF is hosting a [coloring campaign](#) and sharing our newly released downloadable [coloring/activity book](#). We hope the resources you find here remind you of your great strength and offer new ideas to help maintain balance during this time.

As a reminder, the HVSA will continue hosting weekly office hours (info below) and the next session is on April 8. This communication (in addition to prior weekly communications) will be posted on the [DCYF Coronavirus web page](#) (Home Visiting section). Instead of including all the Questions and Answers in this email, please reference the prior weeks. In the coming weeks, we will look at organizing the information differently if accessing answers becomes challenging.

Yesterday, Governor Inslee released an extended Stay Home, Stay Healthy order through May 4. We are continuing to follow the direction of the Governor and will provide updated guidance for the extended order in next week's guidance. You can find more information on the extended Stay Home, Stay Healthy order [here](#).

#### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

**Question:** In regards to consent to enroll families and share personally identifiable data with DOH and DCYF, are we able to get a verbal consent on these right now? *[April 3, 2020]*

**Response:** Send the consent form via email or regular mail, go over it with families over the phone/video and they can then provide verbal consent. You'll have to go back and get a signature after the COVID-19 pandemic or have them sign and return to you. Whatever scenario works best for the family.

- If sent via email, they can also send a reply confirming consent.
- Take a picture of the form and text the picture to the family. Ask them to reply confirming their consent. Snapshot the reply and save it to their file.
- Least recommended, but could be an option: Do a drop-off/pick up using social distancing guidelines.

**Question:** Can you tell us if paid administrative leave costs are allowable under the MIECHV Grant when incurred as a result of emergency protective measures taken to respond to the COVID-19 emergency? *[March 19, 2020, amended April 3, 2020]*

**Response:** During this time (March 18 – May 4, now extended from the previous date of April 24), DCYF intends to pay all invoices with valid program costs, including salaries and benefits, regardless of

whether performance milestones such as enrollment, dosage, etc. are met. Each organization should examine or amend its HR policies according to the governance of the organization.

**Additional Guidance for MIECHV funded LIAs:** If MIECHV-funded staff are reassigned to support non-MIECHV state and/or local emergency response efforts, they may not continue to be paid with MIECHV funds. Per the US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) guidance, MIECHV funding must support approved MIECHV activities. Note: Some emergency response activities, such as assisting families in emergency planning and providing parenting and other supports during this time of social isolation, are within the scope of the MIECHV grant.

**Question:** Some CPS services, like the FAR program, are not currently operating. Is that correct? If so, are there options for supports to step in, in place of those services? *[April 3, 2020]*

**Response:** DCYF continues to respond to new FAR intakes, including making in-person contacts with families. For existing FAR cases, FAR workers will not be conducting home visits for the next two weeks. At that point, DCYF will re-evaluate the need. FAR staff continue to serve those clients while teleworking remotely including making telephone contact with families on FAR cases and complete visits if any concerns arise.

**Question:** For families that have open CPS cases: If home visitors and supervisors have been unable to contact CPS case managers to share concerns about what may be happening in homes right now (and there are some concerns), what should they do? *[April 3, 2020]*

**Response:** CPS caseworkers are continuing to work, and many of them are working remotely. CPS responses to new intakes is an essential function, and these staff remain on the job. Staff should be available via their cell phone or email. However, if there is an imminent concern, community providers can contact either the regional intake line or our End Harm number (1-866-ENDHARM / 1-866-363-4276).

**Question:** Is there a possibility to purchase things such as printers for staff as they work from home under "program supplies" budget line item? *[March 27, 2020, amended April 3, 2020]*

**Response:** Organizations may purchase program supplies to support remote operations. It is important to abide by usage and security standards for both electronic and paper client records should printers be purchased for off-site use and consider management and maintenance of these supplies following the COVID-19 pandemic. Supplies may include resources for families, such as diapers or formula. These supplies may be incorporated as incentives to continue participating and should be reasonable (and non-coercive). Programs should maintain documentation of how supplies are inventoried and distributed to program participants. Programs that have remaining General Fund State supplies budget are encouraged to utilize this budget line before using the MIECHV supplies budget.

#### **Training, Tips and Tricks Shared by LIAs:** *[April 3, 2020]*

- US Department of Labor [Implementing New Paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave implementation](#) (*Families First Coronavirus Response Act Helps Americans Overcome COVID-19 Workplace Challenges*)
- DSHS COVID-19 Related Guidance for Public Assistance:
  - <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/online-community-services-office-cso>
  - <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/changes-workfirst-and-abawd-required-activities-response-covid-19>
- Links for Free or Reduced-Cost Internet Options for Families: [Everyoneon.org](#) and [Comcast](#)

**Quick Reminders (*also in the monthly email sent 4/2/2020*):**

**DCYF Office Hours:** We will continue to hold weekly [Open Office Hours](#). As a reminder, questions brought up during the office hours will be answered in a weekly FAQ. You can find those [here](#).

**All HVSA Survey:** As a reminder, please fill out the [All HVSA survey](#) regarding this year's now virtual All HVSA meeting.

**Due Date Extensions:** Just a reminder, your monthly invoices and enrollment numbers have a 15-day grace period. Your Q3 Report, which was due April 20, is now due May 5 and February's CQI was waived.

Many thanks for all you are and all you do!