

March 27, 2020

## HVSA Home Visiting Programs –

Thank you for continuing to support staff and families during this uncertain time. Your creativity and persistence is amazing and awe-inspiring. This week during our Home Visiting Advisory Committee meeting and the first COVID-19 HVSA weekly office hours, we heard stories of family's gratitude and frequent engagement with their home visitors by phone or text and programs accessing supports from community partners such as diapers and formula. This time is trying for all of us as we balance our own needs and stress as well as those we support. To maintain regular communication and responsiveness with HVSA Home Visiting Programs, we are offering weekly open office hours for the next five weeks on Wednesdays from noon-1 p.m. and a weekly email with new guidance or responses to Frequently Asked Questions. Each week, these will be posted on the [DCYF Coronavirus web page](#) and sent via email.

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

**Question:** Will there be questions (from DCYF) about clients being put on hold and how that impacts data that is in reports? *[March 27, 2020]*

**Response:** DCYF recognizes that COVID-19 will greatly impact enrollment and engagement for home visiting programs. DCYF requests that LIAs utilize the "Comments" box in the monthly report to add information about how many enrollments are on hold or other key information about engagement during the month. For Parents as Teachers (PAT) programs that use Visit Tracker, Visit Tracker has issued guidance on how to enter holds into the system.

**Question:** Is there anything we should be documenting in terms of client responses to continuing visits? For example, will we be asked "how many clients exited due to COVID? *[March 27, 2020]*

**Response:** DCYF encourages LIAs to document as much as possible the extent to which COVID-19 has impacted LIA programming. Each model has different flexibility for documenting exits in the data systems:

- NFP: Flo currently has a set list of Exit Reasons that **does not allow** for COVID-19 specific exit reasons. A request has been made to the NSO to offer an "Other" exit reason as a means of documenting COVID-19 exits. If this is adopted, further instructions will be shared.
- PAT: Visit Tracker **allows** indication of COVID-19 as an exit reason. Please see instructions [here](#).
- Others: Tracking family Exit Reasons is important for understanding program data. If your current data system tracks Exit Reasons or you are tracking this on your own, please report these family exits as "COVID-19" under "Other" or as free text.
- TANF programs do have a place to indicate reasons for exiting in their TANF summary in the Q Report.

**Question/Concern:** My concern is that I currently have almost my whole team (of home visitors) activated on emergency response so the number of telehealth visits happening is very low. *[March 27, 2020]*

**Response:** DCYF understands that some home visiting programs will experience staffing impacts due to staff being called into emergency response and staff shifting schedules due to school and business closures. We understand that these staffing shifts will impact engagement and numbers of visits. Programs will not be considered out of compliance during this time. DCYF requests that LIAs use the

comments sections in both the monthly and quarterly reports to document any COVID-19 impacts on the program. In addition, in the Staffing Detail section of the Quarterly Progress Report, please provide specifics on these changes in staffing arrangements.

**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 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. Please reach out to your project officer and/or grants management specialist for clarification if needed. If MIECHV-funded staff are reassigned to support state or local level response efforts, please inform your project officer and if key personnel have been reassigned, identify an appropriate alternative point of contact to ensure continuity of communication. *[March 27, 2020]*

**Question:** Is there a possibility to purchase things such as diapers under "program supplies"? *[March 27, 2020]*

**Response:** Supplies for the program 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 who have remaining General Fund State supplies budget are encouraged to utilize this budget line before using the MIECHV supplies budget.

**Tips and Tricks Shared by LIAs:** *[March 27, 2020]*

- Legal Aid Partners: Connecting with local legal aid to support families experiencing tenant/landlord challenges
- Community Service Offices (CSO) Partners: Reaching out to caseworkers to ensure TANF recipients are receiving supports during this period of time
- Communication options: Basecamp campfires – communications can be posted there.
- Community Clinic: Formula availability for home visiting programs, for patients and non-patients
- [Employment Security Department](#): ESD has been working to be very responsive to unemployment claims during this time.
- [Alien Emergency Medical](#) (AEM) is a program for individuals who have a qualifying medical emergency and:
  - Do not meet citizenship or immigration status requirements or

Are qualified individuals who have not met the 5-year bar Qualifying emergencies include Emergency room visits, inpatient hospital stays, outpatient surgery, dialysis, cancer treatment and antirejection medications.

Thanks for all you do!

## Home Visiting

