



**Child Welfare Direct Services Continuity During COVID-19 Pandemic
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for CCI Providers**
March 16, 2020

1. Will adjustments be made to DFCS case contact requirements?

A temporary Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) has been developed to provide guidance for monthly contacts with children in foster care, their parents, and their caretakers. Skype, Facetime, or similar applications are approved temporarily as a platform for making these case contacts. In the event of technology limitations, telephone calls can be used. Additional virtual contacts are encouraged beyond the monthly requirement to further ensure and support safety and well-being of children, family members, and caretakers.

2. Will the minimum required staffing ratios be waived while youth are home from school?

Staffing ratios should be maintained as outlined in the RBWO minimum standards. Please communicate with the Office of Provider Management should unusual circumstances arise.

3. What is the protocol if a youth is suspected of having COVID-19?

Contact the youth's physician for medical instruction and follow their guidance for care of the youth and protective measures to be taken for other youth and staff. Notify the DFCS Case Manager and OPM via email and telephone call.

4. If a youth is required to be quarantined, is the CCI required to provide staffing?

Yes, if that child is placed within your program. If your agency is unable to monitor this placement, please contact the DFCS Case Manager and OPM to discuss possible assistance.

5. Should the CCI have a quarantine plan in place for staff/youth that may begin showing symptoms?

Yes, recommendations include:

- Designated staff that remain at the CCI until this crisis situation is over in an effort to practice social distancing and limit the possible exposure that could come from staff coming and going to and from the facility daily.
- An emergency plan in place to address youth or staff that may need to be transported to the doctors/hospital for care.

- An emergency food plan in place so that the facility has enough food to cover a nationally mandated quarantine. Most media outlets recommend having a two month food supply on hand.
- CCI staff and residents should practice proper hygiene and follow the guidelines put in place by the CDC and DPH.

6. Will the child/ren placed with me continue to receive services?

Counseling services should be completed by Skype, Face Time or as a last resort, by telephone. Psychological evaluations, Neuro-Psychological evaluations, Psycho-Sexual evaluations & Psychiatric Mental Health Evaluations can be completed via telehealth. The preferred methodology is Skype or Face Time. Bonding & Attachment/Trauma & CCFA Assessments will be postponed for 30 days as face to face contact & clinical observation is needed to complete these. Please continue to work with your specific service providers to arrange continuation of services.

7. What do we do about visitation?

It is the Division's recommendation that in-person court-ordered visitation be suspended and replaced with frequent video conferencing and / or phone calls to ensure children stay safe while remaining connected to their parents and family during this period. In order to remain compliant with judicial court orders, counties will be working to get local juvenile court approval prior to this temporary practice change occurring.

8. What is the status of trainings and meetings?

Current and scheduled trainings and group meetings are being postponed.

9. Will our agency or staff be penalized because classroom RBWO Foundations training has been cancelled?

OPM will be extending the deadline for classroom training for those participants that were scheduled for trainings during this timeframe. The exact timeframe will be determined once OPM has been cleared to resume classroom trainings. You may print this FAQ for verification to place in your staff file. Monitoring Specialists who complete Comprehensive Audits will be aware of the extended timeframes.

10. Will all DFCS staff telework?

DFCS staff will telework, if possible. Administrative staff will ensure coverage for our core functions in and outside of the office – including providing coverage for the main phone lines and front desk. Case managers are available by cell phone. OPM staff will continue to be available by email and phone. Technical support lines for GA+SCORE and SHINES will still be available to troubleshoot and answer questions.

11. How do we process new placements without paperwork from prior schools to determine the educational needs of the new placement?

DFCS Case Managers have the ability to access the student's academic record remotely within Georgia SHINES through the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) portal. If the DFCS Case Manager experiences difficulty accessing the SLDS link within the child's record, or is unable to log in using the child's Georgia Testing Identification Number (GTID), they should immediately contact their regionally assigned EPAC Education Support Monitor for additional support and guidance. Within the State Longitudinal Data System the majority of the child's academic record information is available. We will also be awaiting and following additional guidance and directives provided by the State Georgia Department of Education. As we receive additional information, our education services team will disseminate information as appropriate to ensure the education needs of our youth continue to be a priority.