



**Child Welfare Direct Services Continuity During COVID-19 Pandemic  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for CCI Providers**  
March 26, 2020

**1. Will the minimum required staffing ratios be waived if the CCI begins to experience staffing shortages due to the COVID-19 impact?**

If at all possible, staffing ratios should be maintained as outlined in the RBWO minimum standards. DFCS will not be issuing general approvals for staffing ratio changes as each CCI and the population they serve is unique. We are, however, willing to consider individual provider requests should significant staffing shortages arise. Please communicate with the Office of Provider Management, who in turn will partner with RCCL and DJJ to consider and respond to requests.

**2. What information related to COVID-19 screening can providers expect for new admissions?**

DFCS staff are following the guidance provided by CDC and DPH related to determining the health of children in foster care. They have been instructed to ask about the presence of symptoms of a respiratory infection ((e.g., cough, sore throat, fever) and history of travel to areas experiencing transmission of COVID-19 or contact with possible COVID-19 patients. Providers should follow their internal processes for medical screening of children, revised to include the CDC and DPH guidance. DFCS is also actively working with Amerigroup and medical partners to potentially obtain testing kits so that our children in foster care can be assessed quickly as the need arises.

**3. What are the additional measures implemented by DFCS to address placement stability and discharge?**

DFCS is asking that all emergency and 14-day discharge notices be sent to Tammy Reed, Placement & Permanency Services Director in addition to the local county DFCS staff. Providers will be invited to "PAUSE" calls, which are designed to ensure placement changes only occur when all possible resources and solutions have been exhausted and/or is in the child's best interest. The goal of the PAUSE process is to improve placement stability for children in care, prevent further trauma associated with multiple placement moves and strengthen the decision-making process related to moves.

**4. Will agencies provide the cell phone numbers of caseworkers and supervisors so an agency can reach them if they do not respond to emails or do we use the 800 number provided?**

Updating listings of county and regional case management, supervisory and leadership contacts are being uploaded to GA Score and/or share with Together GA.

**5. How should we respond if we've been informed that a child or caregiver may have been exposed to or has a confirmed case of COVID-19?**

For cases of potential exposure, contact the physician for medical instruction and follow their guidance for care of the youth or adult and protective measures to be taken for other youth and staff. Also, immediately notify the DFCS Case Manager and/or OPM via email and telephone call. If a person has a confirmed diagnose of COVID-19, The Department of Public Health will take the lead in notifying anyone who has come in contact with the person diagnosed and make determination of next steps for self-quarantine and possible recommendations regarding the foster home or congregate care facility. For DFCS families, document quarantined families on the 'Quarantined Families' log located on the CRRU News SharePoint site.

**6. DBHDD is making personal protective equipment (PPE) available to the mental health clinics. Since we are serving state kids, could DFCS also let CCIs and CPAs get PPE for our kids/staff and sites?**

DFCS will inquire with our state partners, make this request and provide additional feedback to the providers as it is received.

**7. How do we handle employees who have fingerprints expiring on their anniversary date and fingerprint sites are shut down? Can we fingerprint employees at a local sheriff's department if the department is willing to do so or can we only use a GEMALTO fingerprinting site?**

To reduce the spread of the Novel Coronavirus, known as COVID-19, and to support movement to employ measures to increase social distancing as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Georgia Department of Public Health, DHS will temporarily suspend all internal fingerprinting operations provided by Electronic Fingerprint Technicians (EFT) effective March 27, 2020. During this suspension, all applicants and foster parents needing a background check will be required to complete a consent form which will provide authorization for DHS OIG Background Investigations Unit to conduct a Georgia Only Name Based Search. In place of scheduling an appointment for fingerprinting, applicants and foster parents needing a background check will submit consent forms, provided by their regionally assigned EFT. If you need a consent form, please contact your local EFT to obtain detailed instructions. As this is a temporary process, all applicants and foster parents who received a Georgia Only Name Based Search will be required to complete the fingerprinting process upon return to normal operations

**8. Will Residential Child Care Licensing complete annual site reviews?**

RCCL is suspending onsite visits to facilities for routine RL visits, monitoring visits and foster home visits until the recommended social distancing and/or quarantine from the CDC has been lifted.

**9. Will the Office of Provider Management be conducting site visits?**

The Office of Provider Management is also suspending onsite visits to facilities for comprehensive site visits, monitoring visits and foster home visits until the recommended social distancing and/or quarantine from the CDC has been lifted.

**10. What is the process for running out of medication?**

On March 23, 2020 Governor Kemp announced that all Georgia licensed pharmacists are now permitted to dispense a 90-day supply of a prescription drugs if a patient has no remaining refills and the pharmacist cannot get in contact with the prescribing provider. Pharmacists may also dispense early refills for prescription drugs. Please note that these authorizations do not apply to Schedule II controlled substances.

**11. How should EPSDT and/or visits be recorded in GA+ Score if they are unable go to the doctor?**

Providers should identify a medical provider who is able to provide telehealth services. If a telehealth provider cannot be secured, providers should document their efforts in GA+ Score. Providers should use the GA+ Score feature to document the attempt and notate that the appointment was unable to be completed due to the concerns around COVID-19. Providers will not be penalized if they document appropriately via GA+SCORE.

**12. Have all non-emergency medical and dental appointments been canceled? If not, can we assume that they will be?**

All non-essential dental and medical appointments should either be conducted via telehealth services or cancelled if those services are not available or appropriate.