

The Department continues to post other Department COVID-19-related information, including a series of Q&As on the COVID-19 page on our website [www.nd.gov/dhs/](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.

## Human Resources

- Compiling info regarding former DHS employees in the event additional team members are needed.
- Continuing recruitment to fill positions vital to service delivery.
- 83% of Bismarck administrative central office staff working from home.

## Regional Human Service Centers

- Added temperature taking to patient and staff screening
- Increased telehealth capacity and identify additional staff for telehealth and telecommuting
- Trained contracted residential facilities regarding screening of staff and residents
- Implemented screening process, including temperature taking, at all owned and contracted residential facilities
- Updated clinician credentialing to allow provision of group psychotherapy via telehealth

## North Dakota State Hospital

- Prepared isolation/quarantine unit
- Participate in hospital emergency preparedness with other ND hospitals
- Reduce patient traffic throughout facility to reduce cleaning square footage
- Educate patients and assist all in practicing social distancing
- Continue daily screening of patients and staff
- Purchased and distributed germicide to Human Service Centers to increase sanitation of clinic and residential facility surfaces

## Childcare

- Announced Childcare Emergency Operations Grant (CEOG) program, which includes Modified Operating Practices childcare providers are required to follow during the emergency, and an emergency grant to help childcare providers during the emergency and into the recovery.
- A full compendium of resources is available on the DHS website.
- DHS, in concert with the Governor's Office, hosted a Q&A call with providers on March 26.

## Program and Policy

- Addressed operational challenges various provider groups (QSPs, Developmental Disabilities providers, QRTPs, PRTFs, Foster Care, Adoption, Childcare, In-home services) were experiencing related to licensing and certification requirements.
- Provided needed guidance for staff training, facility inspections, background checks, screening practices, etc..

## Behavioral Health Division

- Provided guidance to community grantees and partners on ways to continue substance abuse prevention efforts while social distancing.
- Provided guidance to community grantees and partners on ways to continue implementing strategies targeting the opioid crisis while social distancing.
- Issued guidance to licensed substance use disorder treatment programs, including residential specific guidance, related to COVID-19 concerns.
- Developed and disseminated new resources for [www.parentslead.org](http://www.parentslead.org) and [www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/covid-19](http://www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/covid-19) including [Gratitude: A Tool to Reducing Stress](#) and Virtual Recovery Resources.

## Medicaid

- CMS approved ND Medicaid's 1135 waiver. This waives federal requirements related to prior authorization, provider enrollment, fair hearings, and tribal consultation.
- ND Medicaid submitted 5 Appendix K waivers to CMS, allowing our 1915c waivers to have more flexibility in an emergency such as relocating members when needed or providing more care in homes. The waivers apply to DD, Aging, Autism, Medically Fragile Children, and Children in Hospice.

## Life Skills and Transition Center

- All day program and other programs are being implemented in people's homes.
- Continued education and support for people on social distancing, handwashing and disinfecting common surfaces.
- Staff and people served received education on the use of personal protection equipment.
- In preparation, set up separate space within the agency to support people diagnosed with COVID-19

## Vocational Rehabilitation

- VR team continues to be open for service, not refusing new applicants.
- Many services will be provided remotely.
- Face to face appointments will follow recommended precautions and will be utilized when necessary and appropriate.
- VR team is coordinating with community rehab providers to provide employment supports and is offering resources for individuals who have been laid off or furloughed.

## Council on Developmental Disabilities

- The North Dakota State Council on Developmental Disabilities has voted to invest \$15,000 to fund time-limited projects to assist in filling gaps in services that people with developmental disabilities and families are experiencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID Relief Fund will fund mini grants up to \$1,000 each with no minimum amount. For more information contact: [jhorntvedt@nd.gov](mailto:jhorntvedt@nd.gov)

## Child Support

- Remain open for customer service through website, telephone, and e-mail
- Receive and disburse payments on daily basis
- Temporarily suspending new genetic tests and other in-person appointments
- Modified enforcement as appropriate when parent's ability to pay is compromised due to COVID-19
- Legal actions are moving forward to extent permitted by the local court
- Attorney, casework staff, and administrators have successfully transitioned to telework status

## Human Service Zones

- Remain open for customer service through website, telephone, and e-mail
- Actively responding to child welfare reports
- Continuing to provide in home case management work for all programs once a preliminary COVID-19 screening has occurred