

## INTRO FOR PROVIDER/PARTNERS

Thank you for the work you do for older adults, people with disabilities, children and families. Thank you for your partnership with DHS.

With the constantly changing nature of COVID-19 situation, we wanted to provide some information to you and will continue to do so from this page and all normal DHS channels.

While the State of North Dakota has encouraged staff to suspend or delay all non-essential work travel through April 30, including in-person trainings and gatherings of 10 people or more, we are still seeing clients, delivering services, and visiting people's homes. Likewise, many of the services you provide to the people of North Dakota are of the utmost importance and must continue.

In determining how your agency is going to respond to COVID-19, we encourage you to follow the instructions of your local health authority and your agency's policy. We understand you may have questions and we are working diligently to develop guidance to help you navigate providing services to children and families while ensuring your health.

Maintaining services and contact with the children, youth and families we serve will continue to be an essential function for contracted services providers. The following information may be helpful:

- Contractors must stay in close contact with your local jurisdiction regarding safety protocols to ensure a coordinated approach to service delivery.
- At this time there have been no changes to licensing standards so please continue to follow ND Administrative Code and state law.
- Continue to accept referrals and meet any contact requirements as defined by your contract.
- Contractors conducting face-to-face services either in-home or in offices should contact the client by phone prior to in-person contact to inquire if there are currently any illnesses in the home or office. If so, if appropriate for the service you deliver, consider conducting client contact through alternate means such as phone or other virtual platforms that work for your agency. (see home visit guidance <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/info/covid-19/provider-resources.html>.)
- When planning for or at the time of a home visit, if a client or family member reports being sick, service providers must plan for alternate arrangements to maintain continuity of services until all members of the household are well (e.g. at least 24 hours with no fever, vomiting, etc.)
- To prevent stigma and discrimination, do not make exposure risk determinations based on race, ethnicity or country of origin.
- Ensure confidentiality of people with illness, including those confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after home or office visits in addition to washing hands frequently.
- Avoid physical touch (e.g. shaking hands) with others. Use social distancing.

### EXECUTIVE OFFICE

GOVERNOR  
Doug Burgum

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Christopher Jones

- Offer to share information with the client about available community resources, information and referral networks, hotlines, etc.
- If it is believed that any of these decisions will have a detrimental effect for a client, please elevate the concerns as appropriate.
- If it becomes necessary to modify the method of service delivery, in response to direction from your local public health official, you must notify your contract manager.

Please contact your contract manager if you have any specific questions or concerns. If you have general questions or concerns, please send them to DHS Executive Office inbox at [dhseo@nd.gov](mailto:dhseo@nd.gov). We will continue to provide you additional information and guidance as it becomes available.

Sincerely,



Chris Jones  
Executive Director