

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts on Contracted Services to Families Commonly Asked Provider Questions & Answers (3/14/20)

The Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic facing our state is an unprecedented situation creating stressors across all public and private systems. As our government agencies and public and private entities unite to create structure and develop answers to the many procedural questions during this time of uncertainty, the health of children, families, and workforce is paramount. FIN has received a number of inquiries from providers regarding the impact of the virus on visitation procedures and business routines. FIN is working closely with DCYF during this ever-evolving situation and will update providers with more thorough answers as decisions are communicated to us.

Please reference the following website for additional information:

[WA State Department of Health
DCYF COVID-19 Response](#)

Family Time / Parent Child Visitation

Q: We are worried about COVID-19 and have implemented some additional steps in our procedures. We are sterilizing rooms, removing toys, and have put rules in place around handwashing of all parties during visits to prevent any illness from coming in. Is there more that we should do?

A: The swift and thorough preventative measures already taken by providers has been a solid frontline response to the Covid-19 illness. Further information sanitation process can be found at the [DOH](#) website. FIN also recommends at a minimum conducting this simple three-question assessment of parents and caregivers prior to scheduled visits:

- Is anyone in the household currently sick?
- Has anyone in the household been in contact with anyone know to have COVID-19?
- Does anyone in the household have underlying health conditions?

Follow this [link](#) to a list of registered disinfectant products to be used against SARS-CoV-2, a coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts on Contracted Services to Families Commonly Asked Provider Questions & Answers (3/14/20)



Q: We are taking additional measures to sanitize visitation facilities and wondered if costs associated with this additional sanitation could be reimbursed.

A: FIN is offering providers a \$500 grant to cover costs for additional sanitation through 5/31/2020. If you need additional information about this grant opportunity, please reach out to sheila@familyimpactnetwork.org.

An inquiry has been made to DCYF regarding any expected state agency reimbursement for these types of extra expenses. FIN will keep providers informed of any information received regarding state expense reimbursement related to the Covid-19 crisis.

Q: Confusion has arisen around cancellations from parents who contract Covid-19 and are unable to complete a scheduled visitation with a child. Currently, many providers have been communicating to children, staff and parents that visitations cancelled due to illness will be made up. Is it true that if parents choose the Cancel >24 hours in Sprout, providers won't get paid for staff time? Likewise, if providers choose Cancel < 24 hours in Sprout it will count as a miss against the parent?

A: FIN has elevated this question to DCYF and is awaiting guidance. We will provide you any information as soon it is received.

Q: We are having to cancel visits because of illness. Since we are only paid when we perform a visit, this will have a long-term financial impact on our business and our staff. Have you heard anything about possible adjustments to the payment structure?

A: We have elevated this question to DCYF and are awaiting guidance. We will provide you any information as soon as it is received. Useful information is available on the Employment Security Department ([ESD website](#)) regarding supports to businesses, including a helpful [quick reference guide](#).

Q: Are providers permitted to cancel or stop a visit if parents show signs of illness? Should providers require documentation from medical providers verifying the health of sick parents before conducting their next visit?

A: Follow your agencies infectious disease policy regarding stopping visits for illness. Completing the Unusual Incident Report (UIR) procedure so social workers are informed.

Q: What is the protocol if we believe a child, parent, caregiver has had exposure to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and/or is awaiting results? Who should I be notifying (staff, social workers, FIN, bio parents)? Should I cancel all visits or just some? Do we need to close down our facility?

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts on Contracted Services to Families Commonly Asked Provider Questions & Answers (3/14/20)



A: Please follow the Unusual Incident Report (UIR) procedure so the social worker is informed. We have escalated these questions to DCYF and are awaiting guidance. Please follow recommendations from your respective County Health Departments in relation to continuity of operations and potential closure, in accordance with their existing governance structures.

Q: How will school closures impact visitation? While this opens up availability for scheduling visits, there is a chance that all visits would be cancelled, or families may expect to stay home even though their visitation is court ordered. Parents don't want to cancel, but if they do because of social distancing that means visits would be off the table, too. Do you have any information on this?

A: We understand the impact the school closures will have on your work and the families you are serving. This is a very fluid situation and we are working with DCYF to determine next steps. We will keep you informed as information and guidance is provided to us.

Combined In-Home Services

Q: What input / guidance does FIN have regarding the CIHS contractual requirement of weekly face-to-face contact with families as it relates to the virus and discussion about reducing spread of infection via social distancing? Specifically, if providers are working with a family where someone is currently ill with or has been exposed to Covid-19, or encounters a family worried about exposing themselves to the virus through a visitation, is it acceptable to do conduct a tele-therapy session utilizing Facetime or Skype and still maintain contractual compliance?

A: FIN is discussing these issues with DCYF officials. Meetings are currently taking place within DCYF including regional program managers, CIHS leads, EBP developers and executive leadership to address this issue. FIN will provide appropriate guidance as soon as information is made available.

Q. Have other providers implemented additional screen for illness as a result of the Coronavirus.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impacts on Contracted Services to Families Commonly Asked Provider Questions & Answers (3/14/20)

A. We have heard that others are adjusting screening processes. We would suggest that if you haven't already done this to conduct this simple assessment of parents and caregivers prior to scheduled appointments. In the assessment, ask:

- Is anyone in the household is currently sick?
- Has anyone in the household been in contact with anyone know to have COVID-19?
- Does anyone in the household have underlying health conditions?