



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

ROBERT GORDON
DIRECTOR

March 25, 2020

Dear Caregivers,

This is an update to the communication that was issued on 3/19/20. Effective 3/24/20, Governor Whitmer's [Executive Order 2020-21](#) temporarily suspends activities that are not required to sustain or protect life. Unfortunately, this means that in-person visits to your home, as well as in-person visits between children and their parents/siblings, are not possible at this time. This restriction will be in place until 4/13/20; MDHHS will revisit this restriction at that time and will resume in-person family contact as soon as possible.

Because it is critically important for children to maintain contact with their parents and siblings, the child's caseworker will work with you to arrange phone calls, Skype, and/or FaceTime, to allow as much contact as possible. The caseworker will also use these means of technology to provide support and answer any questions you may have.

In recognition of the difficulties many caregivers are facing, a brief survey has been developed to gain a better understanding of the things the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) can do to help. If you have not already done so, please take a few moments to complete the survey at the following link:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/COVID19_CaregiverNeedsSurvey_Link2

We recognize many services are not available or accessible at this time. The information provided below may assist you with accessing medical, dental, and mental health services for the children in your care:

- **Medical:** Many physician offices can address medical concerns without a face-to-face visit. During the Governor's emergency declaration period, Medicaid covers physician visits, typically provided face-to-face, by telemedicine, and by telephone. Contact your physician to determine which method is most clinically appropriate for the children in your care based on the physician and patient's resources and medical needs.
- **Dental:** Dentists are not currently providing routine check-ups or treatment if a patient is not in pain. If the child in your care experiences a dental pain, contact your dentist for treatment options.
- **Mental Health:** Behavioral health services provided by Community Mental Health Service Programs to individuals with serious mental illness, children with serious emotional disturbance, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, substance use disorders and all other individuals served by the public health system or experiencing a behavioral health crisis will continue. Behavioral health services are essential to sustain and protect life. If services cannot reasonably be performed telephonically or through other virtual methods, essential home visits may be conducted though there may be modifications if members of the household are instructed to self-quarantine or if other COVID-19 related specific risks are present.

A variety of resources and strategies to help provide emotional support for you and the child in your care are available at the following links:

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/COVID-19_Resources_and_Tips_for_Caregivers_684823_7.pdf.

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/coronavirus/Talking_with_kids_about_COVID_FINAL_684649_7.pdf

Additionally, the article linked below recently written by Bridge magazine includes a comprehensive list of services and supports available to all residents across the state.

<https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-health-watch/michigan-families-can-get-food-cash-internet-during-coronavirus-crisis>

The Michigan Department of Education has informed daycare providers that from March 16, 2020 – April 5, 2020, they will be able to bill for child day care if a child is in attendance, absent, or the facility is closed. During this time period, parents will not have to pay for their portion of the daycare payment. To determine how this impacts you, contact your childcare provider. You can also obtain more detailed information about child day care payments at:

[Michigan.gov/childcare](https://www.michigan.gov/childcare) or by calling the Child Development and Care call center at 866-990-3227.

I encourage you to regularly continue checking <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> for updated information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and <http://michigan.gov/coronavirus> for updates from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). Additionally, general questions regarding COVID-19 can be directed to the statewide hotline (1-888-535-6136), open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or to COVID19@michigan.gov.

Thank you again for your dedication to ensuring the safety and well-being of the children in your care. Please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's caseworker if you have additional questions or concerns. Together, we will get through this time.

Sincerely,

Joo Chang

JooYeun Chang, Executive Director
Children's Services Agency