

 <p>Children's Services Agency</p> <p>Communication Issuance</p> <p>20-041*</p> <p>*REVISED on 3/24/20</p> <p>Previous Version Obsolete</p>	Subject/Title	COVID-19 Response-Central Office Family Preservation Providers Face to Face Contacts with Families REVISED
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	Distribution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSA Central Office Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS BSC and County Directors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Tribes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Workforce Development and Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Agency Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Abuse/Neglect Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Family Preservation Providers

The following provides updated guidance for Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) contracted Family Preservation providers regarding conducting in person contacts for children and families in response to current COVID-19 health concerns and replaces CI 20-041 issued on 03/20/20.

This communication is in compliance with [Executive Order 2020-21](#) and applies to the following central office family preservation contracts:

- Families First of Michigan
- Family Reunification Program
- Families Together Building Solutions
- Building Community Partnership-Parent Partner Program

Families First of Michigan Providers

One in person contact must occur per month (with supervisor consultation to ensure staff safety) for a family identified as high or intensive risk and if the worker and members of the household have answered "no" to the pre-screen questions (see questions below).

The required one contact per month can be met by the assigned Children's Protective Services (CPS) ongoing worker or Families First worker. The Families First worker and the assigned CPS ongoing worker must coordinate to determine who completed and/or will complete the one contact per month.

For the remaining required visits, allowable alternatives are required except when the following conditions apply:

- When there is a need to verify immediate safety that cannot be addressed remotely and if the worker and members of the household have answered “no” to the pre-screen questions.
- To provide concrete resources and support that will ensure child safety and cannot be achieved by any other means and if the worker and members of the household have answered “no” to the pre-screen questions.

Family Reunification/Families Together Building Solutions/Building Community Partnership-Parent Partner Providers

Allowable alternatives to in person contacts must be utilized effective immediately except when the following conditions apply:

- When there is a need to verify immediate safety that cannot be addressed remotely and if the worker and members of the household have answered “no” to the pre-screen questions.
- To provide concrete resources and support that will ensure child safety and cannot be achieved by any other means and if the worker and members of the household have answered “no” to the pre-screen questions.

Allowable Alternatives to In Person Contact

Allowable alternatives include phone calls, Skype, Facetime, or other technology that ensures child safety and allows delivery of family support services.

Documentation of Social Work Contacts

Allowable alternatives should be documented within the social work contact section of the family preservation report and reported to the referring worker to include in MiSACWIS with the rationale “COVID-19.”

Further Casework Requirements and Considerations

- Coordinate with the referring worker to help determine which cases and situations require a need to verify safety in person.
- Inform the referring worker immediately if the family has answered “yes” to any of the pre-screen questions and cannot be seen to verify immediate safety concerns.
- Families in rural areas without access to technology that permits video conferencing must receive daily phone contacts to help verify safety and conduct case activities that can be accomplished outside of a video environment.
- Ensure a plan is in place to consult with the referring worker should a child safety concern arise during video visits.
- Notify the referring worker and supervisor immediately if a family with access to technology does not comply with remote visits.
- Clearly document in the case record that the in-person contacts were waived as a result of a declaration of a national emergency that limits or discourages person to person contact based on public health concerns.
- Complete an incident report within 24 hours and notify the assigned specialist if a worker is exposed to COVID-19 through an in person contact with a family, or if a family is exposed by their worker.

Screening Questions

To assure worker and client safety, the following screening questions should be administered to all household members prior to scheduling the one required visit for high/intensive risk cases and again prior to entering the home:

1. Is there any reason you have been instructed to self-quarantine or isolate? If yes, why?
2. Have you had contact with any Persons Under Investigation (PUIs) for COVID-19 within the last 14 days, or with anyone with confirmed COVID-19?
3. Do you have any symptoms of a respiratory infection (e.g., cough, sore throat, fever or shortness of breath)?

Mitigating Risks

Workers should exercise caution and mitigate risks by using the national, state, and local level guidance provided. Some precautions include:

- Frequently washing hands for 20 seconds with warm water.
- Appropriately covering coughs and sneezes.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Regularly cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, like doorknobs, keyboards, cell phones and light switches.

Resources

- Staff should regularly check <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> for updated information from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and <http://michigan.gov/coronavirus> for updates from MDHHS.

Questions

- If a family preservation provider has questions regarding the face to face contact for a particular case, they should contact their local MDHHS office for guidance. If a local MDHHS office has questions, they should contact their Business Service Center (BSC).

**Please note that all COVID-19 related communications will be revisited, at minimum, every two weeks, unless additional interim guidance is needed.*