

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) in Counties Designated by the Governor as Yellow Phase

ODP Announcement 20-052

AUDIENCE:

All Stakeholders

PURPOSE:

To inform stakeholders about Governor Wolf's announcement of counties that are moving to the "yellow phase" and provide service-specific guidance to Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) stakeholders.

DISCUSSION:

On May 1, 2020, Governor Wolf announced that 24 counties from the northwest and north-central regions of the state will be moving from the red phase to the yellow phase beginning Friday, May 8. This action is part of the administration's [Process to Re-Open Pennsylvania](#). This marks a reduction in restrictions on work and social settings.

The following counties are included: Bradford, Cameron, Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lycoming, McKean, Mercer, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga, Union, Venango, and Warren.

These counties were deemed ready to move to the yellow phase because of low per-capita case counts, the ability to conduct contact tracing and testing, and a population density that will allow for the containment of community spread. For more information about how this decision was made, stakeholders can review the [Risk-Based Decision Support Tool](#) which was developed in partnership with Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) to strike a balance between economic concerns and public health risks.

The Planning Process

For people who reside in counties included in the yellow phase, Individual Support Plan (ISP) teams should use the ODP Reintegration/Transition Guidance Toolkit (release anticipated by May 8th) in conjunction with the probe guidance in the annotated ISP to assess COVID-19 related risk and determine, for each individual, what supports are needed for the individual to be able to safely resume activities or engage in new activities. All conditions outlined in Appendix K of the [Intellectual Disabilities/Autism Waivers Operational Guidance](#) (version 1.0) and the [Adult Autism Waiver Operational Guidance](#) (version 1.0) continue to apply.

To assist with this transition, ODP is providing the following service-specific guidance for stakeholders in counties moving to the yellow phase beginning May 8, 2020.

Community Participation Supports (CPS)

- CPS should continue to be provided in private homes and remotely until the ISP team develops a plan for resuming activities.
- CPS in the community may resume in limited scope. Activities must be allowed by the Governor's order and all appropriate steps must have been taken for the individual to safely engage in the activity.
- Activities and necessary supports for those activities should be established by the ISP team using the ODP Reintegration/Transition guidance.
- Activities may not include more than 3 participants.
- Individuals and staff must be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to engagement in activities.
- Individuals and staff must wear protective masks for the entirety of service provision and must abide by all protocols for hand washing and infection control.
- Outdoor activities aimed at wellness are highly encouraged.
- Visitation with small numbers of friends and family using proper social/physical distancing and masks is encouraged.
- No facility-based CPS may be provided.

Supports Coordination

- Supports Coordination should continue to be provided by telephone or video conferencing solutions following the guidance issued in *ODP Announcement 20-019*.

Residential Services

- Residential services should continue to follow all guidance issued for staff and resident screening for COVID-19 symptoms and infection protocols.
- Visitation restrictions in residential homes are at the discretion of the residential provider and should include risk assessment of individuals who reside in the home. Visitor screening for COVID-19 must be implemented.
- Support for residents to access the community may resume in limited scope. Activities must be allowed by the Governor's order and all appropriate steps must have been taken for the individual to safely engage in the activity.
- Activities and necessary supports for those activities should be established by the ISP team using the ODP Reintegration/Transition guidance.
- Outdoor activities aimed at wellness are highly encouraged.
- Visitation with small numbers of friends and family with proper social/physical distancing and the use of masks is encouraged.

Transportation Trip

- Transportation services may be provided for accessing the community as allowed by the Governor's order and as per the plan established by the ISP team using the ODP Reintegration/Transition guidance.
- Drivers and passengers must be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to services being delivered.
- No more than 3 passengers should be transported at one time.
- Drivers and participants must wear protective masks.
- Consideration should be given to passenger for separation/proximity in vehicle.
- All transportation vehicles must be surface cleaned after each use.
- All transportation vehicles must be deep cleaned at least once a week.

Small Group Employment

- Consider operating in smaller groups to allow for social/physical distancing while on the van/bus, not to exceed 3 passengers.
- Instead of gathering at the facility, consider alternate methods such as transporting directly from the participants' homes to the job site and back to their homes.
- All vehicles used for transportation must be surface cleaned after each use.
- All vehicles used for transportation must be deep cleaned at least once a week.

Supported Employment, In-Home and Community Support, Companion and all other Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS)

- All other services should continue to be provided remotely whenever possible.
- Activities and necessary supports for those activities should be established by the ISP team using the ODP Reintegration/Transition guidance.
- If service is provided face-to-face, the direct service professional and individual must wear a protective mask for the entirety of service provision and must abide by all protocols for hand washing and infection control.
- Staff and individuals must be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to services being delivered.

Additional guidance for staff and individual screening protocols in residential and community services will be provided prior to May 8, 2020.