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**Correspondence to Residential Providers for DCF Contracted Congregate Care Programs  
June 17, 2021**

Dear DCF residential provider,

As more and more residents become vaccinated, COVID-19 cases in New Jersey continue to decline. As such, the Department of Children and Families is working hard to offer guidance to our residential community to align with Governor Murphy's most recent Executive Orders <https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-242.pdf>.

While we await the issuance of formal guidance, the Department would like to offer direction to providers to assist them in decision-making regarding the health and safety of all persons in their respective organizations.

In accordance with the Governor's Executive Orders and P.L. 2021, c.103 which ended the COVID-19 public health emergency, DCF is no longer directing the actions of residential service providers, but strongly recommends that agencies follow the guidance below:

- All persons, regardless of vaccination status, should continue to wear masks and socially distance while indoors. Exceptions would be while eating, drinking, or where medically contraindicated.
- Vaccinated persons are not expected to wear masks or distance outside.
- Non-vaccinated persons are strongly encouraged to wear masks and socially distance while outdoors where/when medically safe to do so (i.e.. high temperatures would be an example of when masks rules may be relaxed but distancing would still continue.)
- Home passes and off site visits would be permitted for all youth in care when clinically appropriate. Quarantine would only be necessary if the youth developed symptoms after return.
- For all persons, link to the CDC guidance for expectations regarding out of state travel <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>.
- For all persons, link to the NJDOH guidance for in-state travel and travel to states connected to NJ <https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/travel-and-transportation/are-there-travel-restrictions-to-or-from-new-jersey>.
- Programs should continue to monitor all youth for signs and symptoms of COVID infection and seek medical care if symptoms develop.
- DCF is also asking each program to draft a communication to parents explaining what the organization's policy will be going forward so they are aware.

As always, thank you for your continued commitment to DCF's vision, that all New Jersey residents -- including individuals in your care -- can become and remain safe, healthy and connected.