



Division of Child Protection & Permanency Summary Guidelines

In response to COVID-19 precautions and planning, the Department of Children and Families' leadership has prepared a contingency plan for Division of Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) operations – one that ensures the safety of staff and the provision of critical services to New Jersey residents. Given the progressive nature of the virus, this plan will be reviewed regularly for any necessary updates or revisions for the next 30 days. **Staff should consult official guidelines issued 3/19/20 for further details.**

QUICK SUMMARY

Most CP&P staff will perform their work functions remotely. Each local office will have a COVID-19 Response Team and a skeleton staff that will support administrative operations. Based on shifting operational needs, staff working via remote technology may be contacted to report to an office or to perform alternate duties.

STATE CENTRAL REGISTRY (SCR)

SCR staff will triage calls and prioritize those in need of immediate response based on three priority levels in order to send reports to the local screeners, 24/7. The local office screener will be responsible for monitoring and assigning reports to the COVID-19 Response Team.

COVID-19 RESPONSE TEAM FIELD RESPONSE

Response teams will be created for each of the nine Areas utilizing 24 paid, volunteer CPP field staff from local and area offices. These staff will respond to calls screened in by the State Central Registry (SCR) and are responsible for conducting investigations and home visits to open and high-risk families.

PERMANENCY WORKERS

Permanency Workers will be stationed remotely and are required to document casework activities in NJSPIRIT or to maintain a detailed notebook of contacts until NJSPIRIT access is feasible. Each is expected to contact their families via remote technology a minimum of once a week and will conference with their respective supervisor's weekly. They also must be available by remote technology to participate in court hearings and submitting court reports, as necessary. Additional guidance and direction will be forthcoming.

SUPERVISORS/CASEWORK SUPERVISORS

Supervisors and Casework Supervisors must schedule weekly conference calls with their staff and weekly group conference calls with their unit. They also must actively conference all families that have Safety Protection Plans and be available by phone/skype to participate in court hearings. Each is required to review court reports prior to submission. With access to NJ Spirit, Supervisors and Casework Supervisors are required to perform all existing functions of their positions.

LOCAL OFFICE RESOURCE STAFF

Local Office Resource Staff are expected to make weekly calls to all resource parents with children placed in their homes. They are required to document each contact with the family in NJ SPIRIT or to maintain a notebook of contacts until NJSPIRIT input is feasible.

ASSISTANT FAMILY SERVICES WORKER

Each Local office will designate two AFSWs to assist in the delivery of emergent supplies to children and families, for which they will each be assigned a vehicle. Others will receive assignments from their direct supervisors to support the needs of families or staff in their units.

PARALEGALS

Paralegals are expected to draft complaints and coordinate emergent court related matters with the DAGs and litigation supervisor.

LOCAL OFFICE STAFFING

Local Offices must be staffed with two clerical, one supervisor, one casework supervisor, a check signer and a person with Medicaid access.

*It is important to note that during this contingency plan, NJ Spirit intakes will still be coded with the following response times: Immediate, 24-hour or 72 hours.