



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Updated Information for the Children’s System of Care Congregate Care Residential Treatment Programs Contracted by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families

April 5, 2023

Pursuant to [Executive Order No. 325](#), issued by Governor Phil Murphy this week, effective immediately, DCF residential providers are no longer required to test unvaccinated staff members for COVID-19 and staff members are not required to submit proof of vaccination.

As a result, any previously issued guidance from DCF related to COVID-19 precautions for Congregate Care Residential Treatment Programs is rescinded. All clinical services shall be provided in-person and without the use of telehealth technology.

Please also note that on May 11, 2023, the federal public health emergency will end and DCF will cease issuing the residential provider survey related to the presence of COVID-19 in OOH settings. This will coincide with the end of the traditional school year, a time of transition for many of the youth being served. Should a provider experience any issues related to the transmission of COVID-19 or any other illness within the facility they should complete an Unusual Incident Report and contact their program lead for further discussion on action steps after having first connected with either a state or local health department.

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) continues to emphasize the importance of health and safety for all individuals and families served by the Department. Though the spread of COVID-19 has slowed significantly, there is great value in preserving many of the preventive health practices for any and all communicable diseases.

In general, all residential providers should employ preventive health practices including proper handwashing techniques, covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, avoiding touching the face, and staying home when ill. Guidance from the CDC regarding cleaning and universal precautions can be found at the following links:

- a. [When and How to Wash Your Hands | Handwashing | CDC](#)
- b. [When and How to Clean and Disinfect a Facility | Water, Sanitation, and Environmentally Related Hygiene | CDC](#)

Should a provider organization become aware that a staff member or resident within one of their programs has contracted a communicable illness (COVID-19, influenza, RSV, etc.), they

should seek guidance from either their local health department or the New Jersey Department of Health (NJ DOH). Either health agency may recommend additional safety measures including the use of masking, quarantining, or other practices to help ensure the safety and well-being of all persons in the facility. Providers are reminded to report any communicable illness outbreak to the Department of Children and Families, per Administrative Order 2:05.

Thank you and be well.