

REOPENING GUIDANCE

Home-Based Support Services

(Family support services, maternal and infant home visiting, and community health worker programs)

The following is intended as a plain language summary of rules for reopening during the COVID-19 emergency and does not replace the need to follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

If program activities are able to be conducted virtually, clients should be offered a virtual home visit. If the visit cannot be delivered virtually or the client prefers an in-person visit, the following guidelines should be followed during the Green Phase.

See also:

[Pennsylvania Family Support Programs Operational Guidance Aligned with the Governor's Phased-In Approach to Reopen Pennsylvania](#)

Protections Needed

Masks

- Employers must provide appropriate PPE to workers.
- Home visitors must be masked when inside clients' homes.
- Ask all those in the home to mask, with the exception of children under age 2.
- Home visitors should bring a supply of masks to ensure that those in the home are able to mask.

Isolate

- Contact each client prior to conducting the home visit and ask the below screening questions. If the answer to any of the questions is YES, the visit should be conducted virtually or rescheduled.
 1. Has anyone in the home tested positive for COVID-19, or is anyone suspected of having COVID-19?
 2. Does anyone in the home have signs or symptoms of a fever, new or worsening cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, new loss of taste or smell, congestion, nausea, vomiting, or respiratory illness?
 3. Has anyone in the home had contact within the last 14 days with someone with COVID-19 or awaiting test results for COVID-19?
 4. Will anyone meeting any of these criteria be present during the visit: weakened immune system, over the age of 65, chronic health conditions (e.g., heart disease, lung disease, diabetes), or other factors that pose a risk if infected?
- Home visitors must screen themselves for symptoms before every shift and may not conduct home visits if they have cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, muscle pain, or new loss of taste or smell.
- Home visitors who have been exposed to anyone with COVID-19 within the past 14 days should not conduct home visits.
- Have sick leave policies in place so that employees excluded from the workplace do not lose earnings.
- If an employee develops COVID-19 infection or has a positive test, businesses and other organizations must take additional precautions to stop the virus from spreading further, as described in [Guidance for Essential Businesses and Organizations During COVID-19](#).

Distance

- All home visits that can be conducted by phone or via the internet should be done remotely.
- Maintain a distance of at least six feet from those in the home when making home visits whenever possible. If closer contact is needed for the service provided, minimize the time spent closer than six feet, consider whether the interaction can occur outside, and open windows if possible.
- Consider walking or riding a bike for transportation if you are able.
 - [Click here for a map of Indego bike stations.](#)
- If you take public transportation, make sure to wear a mask and try to stay at least six feet away from other riders. Wash your hands before and after riding, try not to touch your face, and carry hand sanitizer.
- If you drive to work, drive alone or only with people in your household.
- Conduct the home visit outdoors if possible.



Reduce Crowds

- Try to conduct the home visit separate from other household members who are not receiving the services.
- Do not bring students or trainees on the home visit.



Handwashing

- Employers must provide hand sanitizer to workers for use before and after all home visits.
- Use hand sanitizer before entering each client's home, as needed throughout the visit, and after leaving the home.
- Note that hand hygiene should be performed before and after touching the mask, whether inside or outside of the client's home.
- When you return home from work, wash hands and consider changing your clothes.



Clean

- Wipe down any equipment, pens, etc. that you use inside the home with disinfectant after you leave the home. See [CDC guidance](#) for details.



Communicate

- Educate employees about symptoms and prevention of COVID-19.
- Remind all employees to:
 - Stay home if they are sick or have had contact with someone with COVID-19 within the past 14 days.
 - Cover coughs or sneezes.
 - Maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet.
 - Wear masks (see above).