



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
DEPARTMENT FOR MEDICAID SERVICES**

**Andy Beshear
Governor**

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**Eric C. Friedlander
Acting Secretary**

**Lisa D. Lee
Commissioner**

March 11, 2020

TO: All 1915(c) Home and Community Based Services Waiver Providers
PT 17: Acquired Brain Injury – Provider Letter # A-35
PT 33: Supports for Community Living – Provider Letter # A-56
PT 41: Model Waiver II – Provider Letter # A-24
PT 42: Home & Community Based – Provider Letter # A-94
PT 43: Adult Day Care – Provider Letter # A-56
PT 48: Home Delivered Meals – Provider Letter # A-3

RE: COVID-19 Guidance

Dear Medicaid Providers:

The Department for Medicaid Services (DMS) wants to assure 1915(c) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver providers that we are monitoring the spread of COVID-19 closely. As you know, delivery and receipt of 1915(c) HCBS waiver services both involve close contact with others. We encourage you to take precautions to protect employees and waiver participants as you continue to provide critical support to Kentucky's older adults, people with intellectual or developmental disabilities, physical disabilities and/or acquired brain injuries.

First, employees who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should not provide care to waiver participants until they have been evaluated and determined to be free of the virus.

To prevent the spread of illness, waiver providers should practice prevention measures. This includes:

- Regularly washing hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol when soap and water are not readily available.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with the inside of your elbow or a tissue.
- Having sick workers stay home.
- Implementing cleaning measures in agency facilities to prevent the spread of illness.
- Assisting waiver participants in personal prevention measures as they are able.

(continued)



Additional prevention measures are available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>.

When employees must go into waiver participant's homes, it is acceptable to call ahead and screen for any COVID-19 risk. We recommend the Centers for Disease Control tool available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/public-health-management-decision-making.pdf> for measuring risk related to in-home visits.

If a waiver participant and/or someone living in their home is exposed to or shows symptoms of COVID-19, you should evaluate the participant's service needs. For hands-on services, such as Personal Care, implement your agency's infectious disease protocol. Services that are not hands-on, such as Support Broker or Case Management, may be conducted online or via phone.

We encourage you to be flexible with the waiver participants you serve. If a waiver participant's caregiver or staff member becomes ill, an emergency person-centered service plan (PCSP) modification may be required to ensure the waiver participant's needs are met. In instances where a waiver participant and/or a member of their household has been exposed to or shows symptoms of COVID-19, emergency person-centered planning meetings can be held via telephone to reduce the spread of the virus.

Emergency PCSP modifications may also be appropriate in situations where a waiver participant is concerned about contracting the virus and would prefer to remain at home rather than participating in his or her typical community-based activities, such as attending Adult Day Health Care. This is especially important since some waiver participants fall into the category of people at higher risk for COVID-19: those aged 60 or older with severe chronic medical conditions like heart, lung or kidney disease.

The state developed a website to track COVID-19 cases and provide additional information to Kentuckians. You can find it at kycovid19.ky.gov. DMS will issue additional guidance as needed.

We thank you for your cooperation as we work to ensure our 1915(c) HCBS waiver participants continue to receive these essential services while we fight the spread of COVID-19.

If you have questions, please contact the 1915(c) Waiver Help Desk at (844) 784-5614 or 1915cwaiverhelpdesk@ky.gov.

Sincerely,



Lisa D. Lee, Commissioner