

Dear Residential Child Care Provider,

Thank you for all the much needed support and care you continue to provide to children and families. Your health and well-being are of utmost importance to us, as are the continued services you provide to our DFPS children, youth, and families. We want to share our plans for conducting the essential function of monitoring with you. In order to maintain progress on key issues, we have been mindful to balance the challenges you are facing in the current environment, and have modified activities as follows:

- Background Checks, Emergency Behavior Intervention training, and Trauma Informed Care training reviews will **not** be completed for the second quarter of the current fiscal year.
- The PACES system will be released for the quarterly monitoring beginning in April, however only Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) assessments will be tested. Converting to an electronic system instead of email and excel spreadsheets should minimize the amount of time spent by both parties.
- Office visits for EPSDT checks are suspended until further notice. A contractor must attempt to find a Texas Health Step checkup option using telehealth. The Superior Member Help Line (866-912-6283) can assist if this is an available option with a STAR Health provider. You are reminded to follow the instructions for claiming an exception when an EPSDT via telehealth cannot be obtained which remains consistent with an in-office checkup.
- The majority of work performed during on-site monitoring will now be completed by desk review. Interviews will be conducted virtually when possible.
- On-site physical plant inspections for existing contractors and contract applicants may be conducted dependent on the status of the facility.
- Annual on-site facility monitoring performed by Youth for Tomorrow will be conducted by desk review and through virtual interviews.
- Unannounced 24-hour awake night supervision monitoring visits will be suspended until further notice. The monitoring will be announced with consideration given to the status of the facility relevant to COVID 19.

Because of their importance, several critical activities will not be modified. They include the following:

- The quarterly verification and gathering of each contractor's Sexual Abuse Caregiver Training log will go forward as usual.

- DFPS will continue to gather internal data for the Safe In Care remedy and other performance measures resulting in incentives.
- Non-telehealth (in person) Texas Health Step checkups should be prioritized for newborns, infants and young children especially to stay current on recommended vaccines and developmental surveillance, when available through local provider capacity. While some health care providers have limited capacity to provide well visits at this time, many practices have instituted policies to maintain well visits for young children.

Contract staff are informed of the need to cooperate with verbal health assessments that your agency may be conducting prior to accessing the facility.

We are asking that you contact your contract manager if your facility should go on quarantine.

Please contact HHSC Residential Child Care Licensing with any waiver or variance requests around ratios or licensing questions.

Please contact your contract manager if you have any specific questions or concerns. If you have general questions or concerns, please send them to the residential mailbox at DFPSRESIDENT@dfps.state.tx.us. We will post this email on our [DFPS Public Coronavirus Resources webpage](#), and will periodically update it with general questions that we receive in the provider mailbox. We will of course also continue to provide you additional information and guidance as it becomes available.

Resources

[CDC website](#)

<https://dshs.texas.gov/>

Texans, no matter where they live, can dial 2-1-1 or (877) 541-7905 and select option 6 to get information and referrals to COVID-19 social services, including testing, community clinics, unemployment benefits and more. Dial 2-1-1 to find information about local community resources such as financial assistance for utilities or rent and food pantries, housing assistance, crisis counseling, utility payment assistance, and senior services.