

Interim Guidance for Home Visiting Services by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)

May 7, 2020

This guidance is based on what is currently known about the spread and severity of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The purpose is to guide local maternal and child health programs and home visiting programs on 1) assessing the safety before starting a face to face home visit; and 2) preventing the spread of COVID-19 among individuals, families, and communities. KDHE will provide updated guidance as necessary based on the changing situation. Please check the [CDC website](#) and the [KDHE website](#) (COVID-19 Resource Center) periodically for updated information and guidance for a variety of settings as well as public health and health care professionals. Other information and help are available on the Governor's [Kansas COVID-19 Response and Recovery website](#).

As the state and jurisdictions decide to slowly integrate back to face-to-face home visits, programs may identify a need to visit a family to provide ongoing support or deliver necessary supplies. In these cases, prior to making home visits, home visitors and staff should first make sure they are following the prevention basics provided in the COVID-19 resource, [Guidance for Workers Who Visit Homes](#).

In addition to the prevention basics, Home Visiting programs should contact the families prior to the home visit and screen for the following:

1. Signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as a fever (subjective or confirmed >100.4 degrees F), cough, sore throat, or shortness of breath. Or having at least two of the following symptoms; chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, new loss of taste or smell. NOTE: The CDC and KDHE websites have updated lists of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 along with guidance on when to seek medical attention.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
<https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/224/What-to-do-if-you-think-youre-sick>
2. Contact within the last 14 days with: a confirmed COVID-19 case, someone under investigation for COVID-19, or someone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or other respiratory illness.
3. The immune status/risk of household members: those who have a weakened immune system, over the age of 60 years, have chronic health conditions (e.g., heart disease, lung disease, diabetes), or other COVID-19 risk factors.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html>

If the response is yes to any of the questions above, then the home visiting program should continue with their alternative method of visits based on their model or agency

regulations. Always consult the guidance of your local health department or model before changing the method of home visiting delivery. If the local health agency supports the decision that going into the home is within the best interest of the family, then home visitors and staff should continue to take precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These precautions include:

- Frequently wash hands with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
 - Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when handwashing is unavailable.
 - Clean commonly used surfaces (e.g., countertops, tables, doorknobs) regularly with disinfectant (pregnant women should wear gloves or use green products with disinfectant agent, or ideally have another household member clean the surface when possible).
 - Avoid contact with sick people.
 - Cover your coughs (coughing into your elbow).
 - Get vaccinated for Influenza now, if you haven't already.
 - Practice social distancing and staying at home:
 - o Only go out for essential items.
 - o Avoid gathering in groups (10 people or less).
 - o Keep distance of 6 feet, if you must go out and wear a cloth mask.
- NOTE: Masks should never be placed on children younger than 2.

Resources to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

<https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/225/How-to-protect-yourself-and-others>
<https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/119/Reduce-the-Spread-PDF>

We understand that this is a stressful time for home visitors and other home visiting program staff. Here are some additional considerations for home visiting staff and supervisors:

- Any home visitor with signs and symptoms of a respiratory illness or other related illness should not report to work.
- Staff at high risk of severe COVID-19 complications (those who are older or have underlying health conditions) should not conduct in-person home visits with sick clients.
- If a home visitor develops signs and symptoms of illness while on the job, they should stop working immediately, notify their supervisor, follow state and local health department protocols, and self-isolate at home immediately.
- If after delivering a home visit, a home visitor is identified as being positive for COVID-19, they should notify their supervisor and follow current CDC, local and state health department guidance.

- Emotional reactions to stressful situations such as this public health emergency are expected. Home visitors and other program staff should take self-care measures and be proactive in stress management.

More Information

Mental Health Resources:

- [Taking Care of Yourself](#)
- [Maintaining Positive Mental Health](#)
- [Talking with Children and Adolescents about COVID-19](#)
- [SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Hotline](#)

KDHE Resources

- [COVID-19 Resource Microsite](#)
- Information Line 1-866-534-3463 (1-866-KDHEINF) Monday – Friday 8 am to 5 pm

CDC Resources

- [Coronavirus Disease 2019 website](#)
- [Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Prevent the Spread](#)
 - NOTE: Per the CDC guidance, cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- [Health Alert Network: Update and Interim Guidance on Outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [Interim US Guidance for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management of Persons with Potential Coronavirus Disease 2019 Exposure in Travel-associated or Community Settings](#)
- [About Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [What to Do If You Are Sick with COVID-19](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Persons Who May Have Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) to Prevent Spread in Homes and Residential Communities](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\), February 2020](#)
- [Coronavirus Disease 2019 Information for Travelers](#)
- [Prevent Getting Sick](#)
- [Communities, Schools, Workplaces, and Events](#)
- [What to Do If You Are Sick](#)
- [Information on COVID-19: Pregnant Women and Children](#)
- [Guidance for People at Higher Risk for COVID-19](#)
- [Reducing Stigma and Promoting Resilience](#)

Federal Maternal & Child Health Bureau (HRSA, MCHB)

- [Coronavirus FAQs](#)

