

Responding to COVID-19

Steps All Group Homes and Youth Shelters Should Take

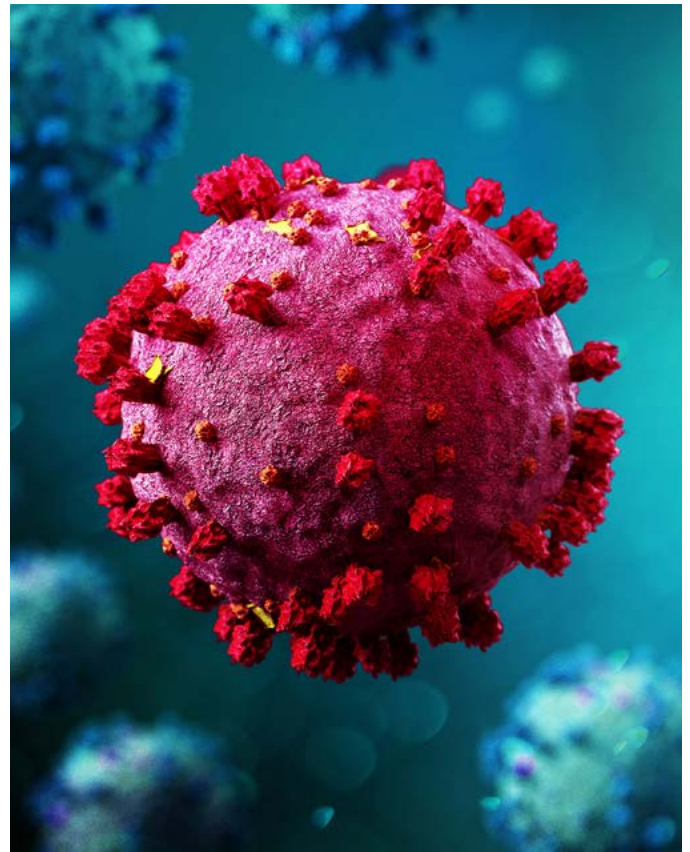
The work you do is critical for ensuring the safety, health and resilience of our state's most vulnerable youth. We recognize that at the best of times the job of supporting these youth is challenging, and has been made infinitely more so because of the COVID-19 pandemic. These are unprecedented times. Thank you for everything you do.

Before COVID-19 Arrives at Your Facility

Complete your organization's COVID-19 specific emergency disease exposure protocols. DCYF provides the following guidance on what should be included and a template for this plan:

- *Emergency Plan Reference Guide:*
www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/COVIDPlanGuide.pdf
- *COVID-19 Prevention, Intervention and Quarantine Plan 00-002* template:
www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/forms/00-002.docx

Train your staff on the following procedures and screen staff daily. DCYF staff can provide technical assistance to help you complete and train staff on your plans. Call your licensor to find out how.



Screening and Prevention

We recommend programs take precautions to prevent exposure at facilities. In addition to the strategies normally employed to prevent the spread of viruses, programs can screen staff daily. To do this, take temperatures and check for symptoms upon entry. COVID-19 symptoms primarily include a fever of 100.4°F or higher, cough and shortness of breath.

Any staff member with symptoms should be sent home and your local health department should be notified. Read DOH guidance on screening online at www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/StaffVisitorsInfo.pdf.

For guidance with COVID-19 infection in Facilities, see page 2.



If COVID-19 Arrives at Your Facility:

There is not a single approach to handling the separation of youth who are well from those who are ill and those who are potentially ill.

If you suspect exposure or infection of COVID-19 at your facility, immediately contact your local health department. Contacts for each county's local health department can be found here: www.doh.wa.gov/AboutUs/PublicHealthSystem/LocalHealthJurisdictions.

The public health department will conduct a disease investigation and provide guidance for residents and staff on how to prevent the spread of the virus. They can also offer resources on quarantine and isolation given the situation.

Once you have contacted your local health department, immediately contact your DCYF licensor or contact the 24/hr Group Care Emergency Hotline that DCYF has established for this purpose: 360-407-1642 or toll free 844-792-7018.



All programs may access the Temporary Residential Youth Care Staffing Pool, which DCYF is establishing to support group homes experiencing COVID-19-related staffing shortages (See *COVID-19 Recruitment Flyer COMM_0073*: www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/COMM_0073.pdf).

State-Dependent and Non State-Dependent Youth: Options for Programs After Exposure/Infection

Non State-Dependent Youth Potential Options:

DCYF staff and the state entity contracting for youth placement services (Commerce, DSHS, HCA) will work with DOH to understand their guidance and based on this and a program's emergency disease exposure protocols, one of the following options may be deployed:

- Youth isolate and quarantine in place, with local public health and DOH support in securing necessary PPE.
- Individual youth may move into a county-provided temporary isolation and quarantine facilities for people experiencing homelessness.
- If there are unsurmountable barriers to access the county facilities, as an option of last resort DCYF may place non-state-dependent youth in DCYF-operated isolation/quarantine facilities, per DOH guidance.

State-Dependent Youth Potential Options:

DCYF staff will work with DOH to understand their guidance and based on this and a program's emergency disease exposure protocols, one of the following options may be deployed:

- Youth isolate and quarantine in place, with DOH and DCYF support in securing necessary PPE.
- Individual youth may move into a separate facility (cottage on site, hotel, etc.) with program staff.
- Youth who are newly coming into care or who are returning to care may move into a center established by DCYF in King County or other locales in eastern Washington that are being explored.
- Programs may request temporary use of a mobile home from DCYF to quarantine staff on site.