



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Bill J. Crouch
Cabinet Secretary

Bureau for Children and Families
Commissioner's Office
350 Capitol Street, Room 730
Charleston, West Virginia 25301-3711
Telephone: (304) 558-0628 Fax: (304) 558-4194

Linda M. Watts
Commissioner

March 23, 2020

Dear Socially Necessary Services Provider,

Due to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) concerns, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) has had conversations with the provider community, our Administrative Services Organization, and the Administration for Children and Families to address service provision in this unprecedented time. Our biggest concern currently is the safety of our families, partners and staff.

After much consideration, it is believed the only Socially Necessary Services that could be provided with any efficacy and not compromise the safety of our children and families are General and Individualized Parenting and Adult Life Skills. An initial call to the family in crisis will help determine if they need immediate face-to-face crisis response.

All Safety Services must be provided face-to-face. All other services should be suspended until further notice.

All face-to-face visitation is suspended. Consult with families to see if they can have visits via technology such as FaceTime and Skype. If FaceTime and Skype are available, please allow these types of visits as much as possible.

For families currently receiving reunification services because their children have recently been returned home, service provision should be provided as frequently as possible using Skype or FaceTime.

Updates to these directives will be provided as information becomes available. As always, if you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact me at Linda.M.Watts@wv.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda M. Watts".

Linda M. Watts
Commissioner