

**To:** All Providers of State and Medicaid Funded Services  
**From:** Cindy Ehlers  
Executive Vice President  
**Date:** April 16, 2020  
**Subject:** Executive Order that includes restrictions on visits to BH Group Homes, Interim Guidance to congregate care facilities for patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, Division of Social Services: visitation for biological families

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### **EXECUTIVE ORDER THAT INCLUDES RESTRICTIONS ON VISITS TO BH GROUP HOMES:**

The Executive Order found in the link below, provides dates of all Executive Orders released over the past month regarding COVID-19 restrictions and includes additional limitations on mass gatherings, restrictions on venues and long term care facilities, and extension of school closure date.

 [Executive Order No.120](#)

### **INTERIM GUIDANCE TO CONGREGATE CARE FACILITIES FOR PATIENTS WITH SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED COVID-19:**

**MARCH 26, 2020 (REPLACES VERSION DATED FEBRUARY 7, 2020)**

Patients confirmed to have, or being evaluated for, COVID-19 infection may be cared for outside of a medical facility and in a congregate living setting based on public health and medical evaluation. Prior to a healthcare facility, healthcare provider, or public health professional approving care outside a medical facility, the following steps should be taken.

If an individual residing in a congregate living facility, such as a group home, dorm or barracks, has mild symptoms and is able and willing to go to their permanent residence without significant travel, this is recommended. Travel to a permanent home setting should be within driving distance via personal transportation. No public transportation should be taken including rideshare, buses, planes, or trains. For further guidance, please refer to CDC's home care guidance.

If transportation to a permanent residence is not possible, isolation can be provided by the university or other overseeing agency following the below recommendations.

### **PRE-REQUISITES FOR ISOLATION IN A CONGREGATE LIVING SETTING (E.G., GROUP HOME, DORM, BARRACKS):**

- 🌱 Healthcare provider or local health department conduct remote telephone assessment to assure congregate living setting is appropriate for patient to self-isolate
- 🌱 Develop communication plan with healthcare provider and the local health department
- 🌱 Educate patients and caregivers on the recommendations for home care infection prevention for COVID-19
- 🌱 Confirm that residential facility can fulfill the recommendations below:
  - Identify a suitable room for patient
  - Identify one or more caregivers who can provide for patient
  - Limit the number of people who have contact with the patient
  - Ensure sufficient supplies
  - Define a laundering procedure
  - Define a cleaning procedure

### **INFECTION PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS CONFIRMED TO HAVE, OR BEING EVALUATED FOR, COVID-19 WHO RECEIVE CARE IN A CONGREGATE LIVING SETTING**

Individuals who are confirmed to have or are under evaluation for COVID-19 should follow the prevention steps below until the local or state health department says they can return to normal activities.

- 🌱 Stay in your room except to get medical care
- 🌱 Call ahead before visiting your doctor
- 🌱 Monitor your symptoms
- 🌱 Wear a facemask
- 🌱 Separate yourself from other people in the building
- 🌱 Avoid sharing household items
- 🌱 Cover your coughs and sneezes
- 🌱 Wash your hands often
- 🌱 Discontinuing home isolation

### **PREVENTION STEPS FOR CAREGIVERS AND HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS OF INDIVIDUALS CONFIRMED TO HAVE, OR BEING EVALUATED FOR, COVID-19 BEING CARED FOR IN A CONGREGATE LIVING SETTING**

- 🌱 Follow healthcare provider's instructions
- 🌱 Provide for the patient's basic needs
- 🌱 Monitor the patient's symptoms.

- 🌱 Keep older adults, very young children, and other sick people away from the patient
- 🌱 Limit the number of people who have contact with the patient
- 🌱 Wash your hands often
- 🌱 Wear a facemask and gloves
- 🌱 Do not share dishes, glasses or other items with the patient
- 🌱 Wash laundry thoroughly
- 🌱 Clean all areas the individual has used often
- 🌱 Monitor yourself for signs and symptoms of illness

Source: <https://files.nc.gov/ncdhhs/documents/files/covid-19/interim-covid-guidance-congregate-living-settings.pdf>

## **DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES: VISITATION FOR BIOLOGICAL FAMILIES:**

### **GUIDANCE FOR COURT ORDERED VISITATION**

For parents who have court-ordered visitation, it is the Division's recommendation that counties reach out to those parents and request their consent to temporarily cease in-person visitation. Parents may agree to having video (FaceTime, Skype, etc.) or telephone visitation. For those that do not the visitation must continue, unless the director makes a good faith determination that the visitation plan is not consistent with the juvenile's health and safety, the director may temporarily suspend all or part of the visitation plan pursuant to 7B-905.1(b). If the Director suspends visitation under this provision, then they should consult with their attorney to ensure the law is followed with regard to filing a motion if the circumstances warrant.

Directors are encouraged to collaborate with the district court judge presiding over juvenile court and the Guardian ad litem office as decisions to suspend visits for children in foster care are made. Notification to parent attorneys is also recommended.

If you have questions or need clarification, please contact your Regional Child Welfare Consultant.

Source: <https://files.nc.gov/ncdhhs/documents/files/covid-19/DCDL-Visitation-Letter-CWS-06-2020.pdf>

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Any questions about this Communication Bulletin may be sent to the following email: [NetworkManagement@TrilliumNC.org](mailto:NetworkManagement@TrilliumNC.org). These questions will be answered in a Q&A format and published on Trillium's website.

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