

Catholic Mutual... "CARES"

Home Visits for Catholic Charities/Catholic Social Service Agencies during the COVID-19 Pandemic

During this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic, there are many Catholic Charities agencies and other ministries struggling with how to continue to serve clients in their homes. The following best practice guidelines should be considered if you are providing client home-based services.

- The Arch/Diocese should have given permission to continue allowing to offer these services.
- Each person entering clients' homes should have at least one N95 mask, disposable gloves and shoe covers. These items may be difficult to procure and you may want to consider suspension of services, when possible, until these items can be provided.
- Individuals providing home-based services should practice the following:
 - a. When dropping off items, leave them at the door without making contact closer than the recommended 6'. The use of disposable gloves is encouraged.
 - b. If possible in your area, employees should be tested for COVID-19.
 - c. Employees/volunteers should check their own temperature each a.m. before heading out and again in the p.m. Temperatures must be less than 100.4 to continue providing services.
 - d. Employees/volunteers should report any personal symptoms of COVID-19 to their supervisor. If experiencing any symptoms, the employee/volunteer should stay home.
 - e. If it is necessary to enter a client's home, the client must be called and the following questions posed before entering:
 - i. Are you feeling well?
 - ii. Do you have a fever?
 - iii. Do you have a sore throat?
 - iv. Do you have a cough?
 - v. Do you have shortness of breath?
 - vi. Has anyone with whom you have had close contact had any of the above symptoms within the past 14 days?
 - vii. Have you, or anyone with whom you have had close contact, traveled to an effected geographic region in the past 14 days?
 - viii. Have you been exposed to anyone that has been confirmed or suspected positive for the COVID-19 virus?

If any answer is yes, the visit should be canceled.

- f. Keep the home visit as short as possible.
- g. Wash hands at the beginning and end of every visit for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

Use agency supplied hand soap and paper towels to wash hands. Do not use clients' supplies to wash hands and never use the clients' towels to dry hands.

- h. Wipe your phone with cleansing wipes after each visit, if the phone is brought into the client's home.
 - i. Use disposable gown or change clothing between home visits.
 - j. Clean reusable supplies and supply boxes with EPA-approved disinfectants such as Clorox wipes, alcohol wipes or sani-cloths after each visit. <https://pdihc.com/products/environment-of-care/super-sani-cloth-germicidal-disposable-wipe/>
 - k. Keep supplies in the trunk of the car and do not bring supply bag into your home or office.
 - l. If a bag must be brought into a client's home, lay a plastic bag, or similar barrier, under the bag to protect the bottom of the bag.
 - m. When not in use, store N95 masks that must be re-worn in a sealable plastic container.
 - n. Do not wear shoes worn during home visits into your own house or office.
 - o. Keep trash bag for all disposables in car and throw out in outside garbage at the end of the day
- All employees and volunteers must be reminded to:
 - a. Wash hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
 - b. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - c. Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
 - d. Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.
 - e. Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles) using a regular household detergent and water.

All CDC guidelines must be followed. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> You should also check with your state and local health department and any other state directives to ensure you are in compliance. (i.e. shelter in place orders).

If you have any additional questions, please contact your Risk Management Representative.