



Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families

DCYF Foster Families

2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance

April 7, 2020

Dear Foster Families,

We are so grateful for our foster families during this challenging time. Our goal is to ensure that you have the information and support you need to keep your family safe and healthy during the COVID-19 crisis. We will continue to share with you the most current recommendations from Governor Raimondo, the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

It is important to remember that **prompt testing and isolation of symptomatic members of your household is essential to prevent further exposure and spread of COVID-19. We want to share with you what you should do if anyone in your home experiences possible symptoms of COVID-19.** These symptoms include any of the following:

- Fever (temperature of 100 F or higher)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle aches
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Runny nose or stuffy nose
- Headache
- Diarrhea

If a household member presents with any of the symptoms above, even if mild, it is important to follow these directions:

1. Everyone in the household and anyone who has been in direct close contact with that person should self-quarantine for 14 days, per the guidance of the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH). Direct or close contact means being within approximately 6 feet of a person for 10-15 minutes.
2. Isolate the person with symptoms. The person should not go to work, school, or public areas and should avoid the use of public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
3. Have the person with symptoms stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. A separate bedroom is often a good option, if that works for your home. The person should also use a separate bathroom, if available. Any common areas should be cleaned and any “high touch” areas such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables every day.
4. Call the person’s primary care physician immediately and describe the symptoms.
5. Follow all the directions given by the physician. These may include:
 - a. Staying at home and monitoring symptoms.
 - b. An in-person visit or virtual visit with your doctor (does not typically include a COVID-19 test).
 - c. A doctor’s order for COVID-19 testing.
6. Call the **DCYF Hotline at 1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453)**. The hotline will ensure that the team at DCYF is notified and we will work closely together to support you and your family based on your individual needs.
7. If the hotline is contacted, you will be asked the following questions:
 - a. What is the name of the person in your home who has symptoms?
 - b. Is this person a foster child, a foster parent, or another household member?

- c. Who else is in your home?
 - d. What is the name of the doctor who you have been talking with?
 - e. If a COVID-19 test was completed, where was the test completed?
 - f. Is the household following all rules for isolation and quarantine?
 - g. Do you have any emergency needs?
8. Please use **e-mail or phone to check in with the youth's social caseworker and their supervisor** on a regular basis.

If your home needs to be quarantined:

- Everyone in the home should stay home and not go to work, school, or public areas, per RIDOH guidance.
- Groceries, food, or other materials should be delivered to the home, and the people in the home should not have close contact with people who are delivering these items.
- The Department can help support any needs you may have.

If someone in your home must be isolated:

- The isolated individual should not share a room with anyone else, if possible.
- The isolated individual should remain in a specific room and away from other people in your home, including during meal times, and should wear a mask if they are around other people.
- If possible, a separate bathroom should be designated for use exclusively by an isolated individual. If the house does not have a bathroom that can be used exclusively for the isolated individual, the bathroom should be disinfected after each use, when possible. Bathroom windows should be opened, weather permitting.
- Avoid sharing personal household items and clean all "high-touch" surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables every day.
- The person must remain in isolation until they have been completely free of symptoms for at least 72 hours and at least 7 days have passed since the first symptoms started.

Preparing ahead of time

- Talk about your family's process for getting food and household supplies. We can help you with this if your home is quarantined.
- Develop plans to designate specific bathrooms for exclusive use by someone who may be isolated.
- Discuss plans with your family; this may include discussions with youth on the need to change bedrooms.
- Wash hands frequently. You can develop fun, kid-friendly routines in your house such as the new Baby Shark song about handwashing.
- Remind everyone about how to cough or sneeze in the safest way: into a tissue (with appropriate hand hygiene immediately afterwards), a sleeve, or an elbow.
- Clean doorknobs, bathrooms, and other frequently touched surfaces several times a day.
- Have contact information easily accessible:
 - Doctors for everyone in the home
 - DCYF Social Caseworker and Supervisor
 - DCYF Hotline: 1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453)

Other Critical Information Resources

- RIDOH COVID-19 webpage: <https://health.ri.gov/covid/>
- CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>
- CDC Infection Control Basics: <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/index.html>
- CDC Guidance on Disinfecting Living Spaces: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html>
- RIDOH Guidance on At-Home Quarantine: <https://health.ri.gov/publications/factsheets/COVID19-At-Home-Quarantine.pdf>