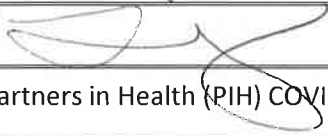


NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
Division of Long Term Supports and Services
Bureau for Family Centered Services

129 Pleasant St.
Concord, NH 03301

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE BFCS GENERAL MEMORANDUM (GM)	
DATE:	March 23, 2020
TO:	Partners in Health (PIH) Lead Agency Supervisors (LAS), PIH Family Support Coordinators (FSC), Bureau for Family Centered Services Staff
FROM:	Deirdre Dunn Tierney, Chief, Bureau for Family Centered Services
SIGNATURE:	
SUBJECT:	Partners in Health (PIH) COVID-19 PIH Emergency Guidance #1
GM NUMBER:	PIH-GM-001-20
EFFECTIVE DATE:	March 13, 2020
REGULATORY GUIDANCE:	This memo is a communication tool circulated for informational purposes only. The goal is to provide information and guidance to the individuals to whom it is addressed. The contents of this memo and the information conveyed are subject to change. This communication is not intended to take the place of or alter written law, regulations or rule.

MEMORANDUM SUMMARY
<p>The purpose of this memorandum is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide statewide guidance to Agencies that provide Partners in Health (PIH), relative to COVID-19 Emergency preparation, response, and continuity of service delivery for PIH services system.

The Bureau for Family Centered Services (BFCS) is working with its federal and state partners, as well as other divisions within the Department of Health and Human Services, to ensure that families and individuals continue to receive supports and services during the COVID-19 Emergency. The health and safety of the people that receive support and the direct support professionals who provide that care are at the center of the Bureau’s emergency preparedness planning priorities. The Division of Long Term Support and Services (DLTSS) activated its Continuity of Operations Plan effective Friday, March 13, 2020, following the Governor’s Executive Order and extends its sincere gratitude to those who are working to ensure the health and safety of the people we support while also supporting their own loved ones.

In an effort to allow for greater flexibility for Partners in Health (PIH) agencies to deliver services safely and efficiently while implementing precautions around COVID-19, and in accordance with the Governor’s Executive Order 2020-04 dated March 13, 2020, BFCS has reviewed policy, practice, and

regulatory guidelines. This PIH COVID-19 Emergency guidance will be in place on a 60 day basis effective Friday, March 13, 2020, and BFCS will provide, modify and extend guidance to PIH Agencies as needed, based on the emerging COVID-19 Emergency.

Considerations of Health, Safety, Privacy Protection, and Human Rights

The Bureau has considered allowing for flexibility while ensuring health and safety in developing the following COVID-19 Emergency Guidance. The Bureau is mindful of human rights considerations for those we serve during the COVID-19 Emergency.

The following are specific considerations:

- Staff and family safety remains a priority
- HIPAA requirements remain in place and must be followed
- To support the CDC recommendations of social distancing, any meetings such as committee meetings, service agreements, team meetings and/or site visits are permitted to be held remotely through audio, video conferencing or telephonically.

Action Plans & Documentation

He-M 523.10(d)(8) and (e)(1) PIH Coordinator Duties and Qualifications, requires the development of an action plan with each young adult and family and that family support services are initiated through the action plan.

- Needs identified by families that are not in a current action plan, may be prioritized during the COVID-19 Emergency.
- Any new COVID-19 Emergency related Needs and Goals must be added to the Action Plan.
- Documentation when addressing COVID-19 Emergency related Needs and Goals, must indicate that the activity/support is the result of the COVID-19 Emergency.
- Due to the COVID-19 Emergency and the CDC recommendation for Social Distancing, use of alternative methods (e.g. phone, video conference or other remote communication methods) of providing family support is allowable and billable.

Communication

PIH Programs, by design, are flexible and responsive to emerging family and community issues. The expectation is that PIH family support services continue in accordance with each Lead Agency's Continuation of Operations Plan.

- PIH shall provide current and accurate out of office messaging that directs families to appropriate alternatives or resources during the COVID-19 Emergency.
- PIH must inform the BFCS PIH Program Manager, Heidi Petzold, at 271-4508 or Heidi.petzold@dhhs.nh.gov, of decisions made regarding closures, reduced/suspended services, updates and/or changes within 24-hours of any such decision.

Resources

Please continue to stay informed with the frequent updates about the COVID-19 Emergency.

NH.GOV

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

Have questions about COVID-19?

Call 2-1-1

Phone dial: 1-866-444-4211

TTY: 603-634-3388

