



COUNTY OF YOLO

Health and Human Services Agency

Karen Larsen, LMFT
Director

Karleen Jakowski, LMFT
Director, Child, Youth & Family Branch

MAILING ADDRESS
137 N. Cottonwood Street • Woodland, CA 95695
(530) 666-8516 • www.yolocounty.org

Dear Valued Partners,

In these difficult and uncertain times, I want you to know that the safety and well-being of the children and families we serve, our Resource Family network, our staff and the larger community is our highest priority. On behalf of the Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency I want to express how incredibly grateful we are for the love, care and support each of you are providing to the children and youth in your care as we all navigate the uncharted territory of this pandemic health crisis.

Yolo County is working diligently to address concerns and prevent the spread of COVID-19, to the extent possible. We want to ensure that Resource Families have access to accurate information and guidance about what can be done to minimize the risk of infection and further transmission of COVID-19. Please see below and the attached resources and links for the most up to date information.

What to Know

It is important to understand how COVID-19 is spread, what steps to take to prevent infection, and what to do if you suspect that you or a member of your family may be infected. COVID-19 spreads in much the same way as influenza, or the flu. An infected person can spread the virus through close physical contact or through droplets produced by coughing or sneezing. The virus can also live on surfaces touched by an infected person, which can spread to others who touch it and then touch their eyes, nose, or mouth.

For additional guidance please utilize the following resources for current and accurate information:

Yolo County

<https://www.yolocounty.org/health-human-services/adults/communicable-disease-investigation-and-control/novel-coronavirus-2019>

California Department of Public Health (CDPH, State)

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, National)

<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>

World Health Organization (WHO, International)

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>



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Visitation

In light of the shelter in place orders issued effective at 12:01am March 19, 2020, you will see some changes to visitation processes for children in your care. The agency is working collaboratively with Yolo County Superior Court, Visitation Contractors, Biological Families, Social Workers and Resource Families to adjust current visitation practices to move to 100% telephonic or videoconference visitation in alignment with shelter in place orders and to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. A representative from the Agency will reach out to you prior to the scheduled visit and provide you with instructions. In cases where parents are unable to utilize videoconferencing for visitation, we may ask you to utilize telecommunication for visits. The Agency will ensure your confidential contact information is kept private, as a third-party visitation monitor will be assisting to ensure high quality and confidential visitation.

Mental Health and Other Services

In light of the shelter in place order, services from other agencies may be interrupted without notice. Please inform your social worker if you are experiencing challenges with unmet needs for the children and/or youth placed in your home.

The Child, Youth and Family Branch is an integrated branch of the Health and Human Services Agency and as such, includes Children's Mental Health. We are working with our internal Children's Mental Health team and local network of contracted providers to ensure continuity of services; however, these service may look different than before, and will likely not include in person contact, to the extent possible. The mental health service provider will be in touch to discuss service delivery.

Caseworker Visits

It is imperative that caseworkers continue to ensure the well-being of children in care, and that imperative must be balanced against the health of caseworkers, children in care and all of the people with whom they come into contact. The current public health challenges and guidelines require a reconsideration of the requirement for caseworkers to visit children in foster care on a monthly basis. While the monthly caseworker visitation requirement remains in place, federal guidelines have been modified to permit visits to be conducted by video conferencing in these extraordinary circumstances. Child Welfare Services are considered essential services in Yolo County and as such, case carrying social workers will be available during the shelter in place orders.



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What to Do

Your wellbeing and the wellbeing of the children in your care is extremely important to us. Remember, children often feel what you feel. Answering their questions and providing honest and age-appropriate information is often best.

Although facts and circumstances are changing quickly, Yolo County Health and Human Services is meeting with public health officials regularly, and will continue to keep our caregivers apprised of any new developments.

The Resource Family Approval Unit will continue to offer training through Foster Care College and work with the FKCE to ensure that we are providing Webinar-style training opportunities. More information about these training opportunities will be provided as soon as possible. We will be postponing the CPR class scheduled for March 28, 2020.

My heartfelt gratitude to each of you for all you do to support the children, youth and families in our community.

In partnership,

Karleen Jakowski, LMFT

Branch Director

Child, Youth and Family Branch

