



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES**

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The intent of this correspondence is to provide further guidance regarding temporary changes to practice as a result of the declaration of the state of emergency and precautions against the spread of COVID-19. These changes include visits between children and their families, changes to survey procedures by the Office of Inspector General (OIG), and guidance related to routine dental, vision, and well-child medical appointments.

With the understanding of Kentucky's Courts, in order to minimize person-to-person interaction and the spread of COVID-19, the means by which visitation takes place or familial contacts are made are temporarily changing. The Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) is honoring court ordered visitation for foster children while at the same time observing precautions to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, visits between children and families may be conducted via Skype, FaceTime, or similar platforms. Due to the stress and anxiety that this unprecedented situation is causing, DCBS encourages more frequent contacts between children and their families. However, at a minimum, the frequency of contact should remain the same as prior to the declaration of the state of emergency. In addition to communication between DCBS and the Administrative Office of the Courts, the DCBS Service Region Administrators are contacting their respective judges to further discuss this temporary change in practice.

Until further notice, the OIG Division of Regulated Child Care (DRCC) will suspend regular licensing survey visits, which are normally conducted on-site. The DRCC licensing surveyors will continue investigating complaints or concerns of high priority.



If children are due for dental, vision, or routine well-child check-ups during the state of emergency, please follow the dental, vision, or medical provider's recommendations concerning whether these visits should occur. If a routine dental, vision, or well-child check-up cannot be completed timely because of concerns about spread of COVID-19, it is imperative that the reason the appointment was delayed is clearly documented in the service recordings through PCC tracking.

Finally, attached is a memo from the Kentucky Board of Social Work regarding Executive Order 2020-243, which eliminates barriers to the provision of telehealth services during this state of emergency. The following link also provides information from the Department of Health and Human Services regarding HIPAA compliant videoconferencing platforms.

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/emergency-preparedness/notification-enforcement-discretion-telehealth/index.html>