



COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions for Homeless Service Providers

This document will be updated periodically by All Chicago to share information related to the COVID-19 crisis with homeless service providers.

Last updated: 3/31/2020

Questions most recently updated: N/A

Question	Answer
<p>1. Information Access/Slack Channel: How can I access information about COVID-19 as it is being shared with the community?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Slack Channel:</i> All Chicago has created a free Slack channel for homeless service providers to stay updated with information and share resources. The link to the Slack channel can be found here, and can be shared widely. The Slack channel has subchannels for #covid-19-response (up-to-date information), #resources, and #provider-questions. • <i>Weekly Webinar:</i> All Chicago is providing a weekly webinar on Mondays at 12 p.m. to share information about COVID-19 response. Find information about the next webinar here. • <i>All Chicago Website:</i> All Chicago will be updating this page of its website frequently with news and information. Sign up to get alerts here, too. • Please email questions to Chicago Department of Public Health at coronavirus@cityofchicago.gov or call 312-746-4835. The Chicago Department of Health has established a call center to address questions from the public. Phone lines are currently staffed from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week. Please note that this call center cannot access COVID-19 testing results. • Find information posted to the Chicago Department of Public Health’s website here.
<p>2. Homelessness Prevention: Who should I speak with regarding homeless prevention assistance?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 311 can connect people to the Homeless Prevention Call Center. Keep in mind, the Homeless Prevention Call Center is not open on Fridays and is working at a restricted capacity due to COVID-19. If you have difficulty reaching someone or accessing funds, please request a call-back from a manager as there are still ample funds available for Homeless Prevention assistance.
<p>3. Shelter Placement: Who should I speak with regarding shelter placement? Will transportation be available?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 311 is currently taking calls for shelter placement. Residents can call 311 from any address. Please do not send clients to hospitals or police stations. If residents need a place to wait, they can request from any DFSS Community Service Center Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. • Transportation is still being provided, but at a reduced capacity due to reduced staffing resources.

<p>4. Shelter Quarantine Guidance & Temporary Housing: What guidance is available for shelters serving individuals who need to be quarantined or isolated?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For questions about quarantine and isolation, please email questions to Chicago Department of Public Health at coronavirus@cityofchicago.gov or call 312-746-4835. The Chicago Department of Health has established a call center to address questions from the public. Phone lines are currently staffed from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven-days a week. Please note that this call center cannot access COVID-19 testing results. • Please see the DFSS Shelter Guidance Document. • Follow your agency’s Emergency Policies & Procedures or create them if they need to be created. • For individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 or who are showing symptoms and awaiting test results and need to be quarantined or isolated, hotel rooms have been made available by the city of Chicago. Keep in mind, these rooms are available by referral only through their healthcare provider. For more information on this, please follow the link provided here. • Temporary housing funding can be provided through the Chicago COVID-19 Homeless System Agency Emergency Fund. • HUD has provided guidance on utilizing participant screening tools for shelter entry to limit exposure: please see link here. • HUD and the CDC have provided guidance on non-congregate approaches to sheltering for COVID-19 homeless response: please see link here. • All Chicago is monitoring guidance for shelters and will be providing information as it becomes available. Please monitor guidance coming from DFSS, CDPH, and HUD.
<p>5. Provider Staffing: How should providers handle staffing during COVID-19 to reduce exposure and in the case of staff exposure?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For questions about staff exposure, please email questions to Chicago Department of Public Health at coronavirus@cityofchicago.gov or call 312-746-4835. The Chicago Department of Health has established a call center to address questions from the public. Phone lines are currently staffed from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven-days a week. Please note that this call center cannot access COVID-19 testing results. • At this time, agencies should follow guidance from DFSS, CDPH, and HUD. • OSHA has provided guidance on preparing workplaces for COVID-19: please see link here. • Staffing hazard costs and additional staffing resources can be provided through the Chicago COVID-19 Homeless System Agency Emergency Fund. • Starting April 2, All Chicago is convening a weekly peer-sharing webinar on Thursdays from 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. We encourage participation in this webinar so that peers may discuss strategies for staffing and financial needs. To register, please click here.
<p>6. Coordinated Entry System (CES) Access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients should not be directed to any physical location at this time for the sole purpose of completing a Standardized Housing Assessments.

<p>Points: Are Access Points available for clients to be assessed for housing at this time?</p>	<p>Assessments will be completed over the phone Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Assessments may lead to a future housing option but will not quickly solve a client’s immediate crisis. Please direct client’s call (312) 361-1707 for assistance. Keep in mind, this will remain in effect throughout April and due to the high volume of calls, you may experience a wait time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients who are not currently engaged with a project will not be expected to update their assessments every 30 days in order to stay active with CES during this time. • Contact CES: Please find more information at www.csh.org/chicagoces. For more information, reach out to: Ben Darby (assessments) - bdarby@housingforhealth.org, Jessica Smith (veterans) - jessica.smith@csh.org, Matching team led by Sal Estrada - ChicagoCES@catholiccharities.net, All Chicago help desk (HMIS) - helpdesk@allchicago.org, Stephanie Sideman (other topics/feedback) - stephanie.sideman@csh.org.
<p>7. Remote Case Management: What recommended strategies are there for conducting case management and eligibility-level assessments like recertifications with clients during this time, for projects working remotely?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional case management resources can be provided through the Chicago COVID-19 Homeless System Agency Emergency Fund. • Most funding entities are relaxing documentation requirements. Check with your funding entity to see which documentation requirements are being relaxed and to develop a plan to get the documentation you need to house participants during this time. • HUD has provided guidance that electronic signatures are acceptable forms of documentation. • Mail and video options should be utilized as much as possible for communication purposes with clients and landlords. • All Chicago has published guidance about emergency protocols for Housing Inspections and Recordkeeping. • Starting April 2, All Chicago is convening a weekly peer-sharing webinar on Thursdays from 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. We encourage participation in this webinar so that peers may discuss strategies for virtual case-management. To register, please click here. All Chicago will be working on providing additional guidance related to this question as peer-to-peer sharing is utilized more.
<p>8. Supporting Client Needs: How can we continue to support clients who are unable to travel or communicate via phone?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening clients for high needs and delivering services should continue during this time, and agencies are encouraged to share creative strategies. • Agencies are encouraged to participate in peer discussions about how to continue providing support to clients who have needs that reach beyond virtual case management. Starting April 2, All Chicago is convening a weekly peer-sharing webinar on Thursdays from 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. We

	<p>encourage participation in this webinar so that peers may discuss strategies for virtual case-management. To register, please click here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider using emergency fund resources to assist clients who are having trouble accessing resources like phones, food, etc. Additional case management resources can be provided through the Chicago COVID-19 Homeless System Agency Emergency Fund.
<p>9. Supplies: Where can we access scarce needed supplies like PPE, cleaning supplies, etc.?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to avoid duplication of efforts, All Chicago is not leading the effort to identify where scarce equipment can be procured. The Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) has created this form to manage the collection of donations of PPE and medical supplies in Chicago. To donate goods, click here.
<p>10. Financial and Staffing Impact: How can agencies address the financial impact of the COVID crisis, as well as additional staffing needs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing and additional operating cost resources can be provided through the Chicago COVID-19 Homeless System Agency Emergency Fund. All Chicago has published guidance about emergency protocols for Housing Inspections and Recordkeeping. Agencies are encouraged to take advantage of federal resources that are becoming available to address the financial struggles of organizations with fewer than 500 employees. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) makes organizations eligible for loans to meet payroll and similar costs. The application will be available soon and agencies should apply quickly because it is a first-come, first served opportunity. More information is available here. Starting April 2, All Chicago is convening a weekly peer-sharing webinar on Thursdays from 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. We encourage participation in this webinar so that peers may discuss strategies for staffing and financial needs. To register, please click here.
<p>11. Housing New People: What strategies are being recommended for housing new people during the COVID-19 crisis?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants should still be housed during the COVID-19 crisis and providers are encouraged to identify and share creative methods of doing so. Request access to the Housing Availability listserv by contacting: Melanie Felt at mfelt@allchicago.org. Housing leads will continue being sent during health crisis. We have identified landlords and property managers that are continuing to house clients during this time. All Chicago has published guidance about emergency protocols for Housing Inspections and Recordkeeping. Starting April 2, All Chicago is convening a weekly peer-sharing webinar on 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. We encourage participation in this webinar so that peers may discuss strategies for virtual case-management. To register, please click here.
<p>12. Shelter Capacity: Are shelters operating 24 hours?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelters have increased capacity to 24/7 so shelter in place guidance can be most effective. Any new individuals are taken to the emergency shelters DFSS has established.