



Memorandum

To: All DCF Staff  
From: Commissioner Vanessa Dorantes  
Date: 10/4/2020  
Re: Update on Department Operations and Weekly Video

Last year at this time, I came to the realization that early detection may have saved my life (*see attached repeat of the information I shared in 2019*). Gov Lamont has also recently launched a PSA reminding CT's citizens that during this COVID-19 pandemic, we cannot neglect our own health. We have some of the best healthcare providers in the country right here. So please ensure you have your annual physical and be proactive with preventative medical appointments.

Click here to hear the latest Dept updates => [Commissioner's Weekly Video 10-4-20](#)



October is also **Domestic Violence Awareness** month. This reminds us of the seasonality of our work. Both October and March tend to be the high call volume months of new reports of suspected child maltreatment called into the Careline.

The Fall has already been ushered in by very difficult cases and significant injuries to young children. A family's history, including review of any non-accepted reports puts us in the best position

to make informed decisions.

Timely documentation, reflecting consistent supervision, is the roadmap to best practice. We cannot allow *COVID fatigue* distract us from our mission critical work.

Supporting families through crisis is the most direct way to keeping children safe.



Our triage decision making processes are examples. Whether we are talking about conducting face to face case activity or facilitating in-person visits between children in care and their families, we should be planning through a public health perspective.

Decision making should include factors such as transportation considerations (*sanitizing the state car before & after use*), where the visit will occur (*indoor vs outdoor planning*), who will participate in the in-person contact and a trouble-shooting plan. A public health perspective always includes a discussion of the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) (all adults and children over 3 are expected to wear masks during transport & throughout the visit --this requirement must be understood during triage planning)



*Note: These are trying times for everyone. Planning thoroughly will reduce tense moments during in-person meetings. (i.e. discuss things like if removing masks for a quick photo will be allowed.)*

*time a mask is removed, even momentarily, the transmission probability is increased....So please agree on any risk/benefits beforehand. Wearing PPE while conducting in-person business of DCF is a workplace requirement for all staff.*

**Prior** to any in-person visit occurring, we should be asking the participants if they, or any household members these three questions:

- 1) Do you currently have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (*sore throat, fever of 100.4 or higher or shortness of breath?*)
- 2) Have you had direct contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19?





3) Have you recently traveled from another country or "hot spot" state?

We want everyone to be kept safe as possible. We must all do our part. Any questions about this should be asked of Human Resources.

Speaking of HR, in an effort to help mitigate the state's budget deficit, all vacant positions without a bona fide offer to a selected candidate by Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> were reset. Departments will then prioritize and justify positions to be resubmitted to the Office of Policy & Management (OPM) if necessary.

Next week, we will not be providing a weekly memorandum or video. We are putting the finishing touches on the next biennium's legislative and budget proposals to OPM then to the Governor's office for review.

SEE you all again in two weeks!

TOGETHER we will rise from this ...



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*"I do my best because I'm counting on YOU counting on me..."*  
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