
From: Taryn Sloss
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2020 5:19 PM
To: Taryn Sloss
Subject: COVID-19 Update and Guidance from TDMHSAS

Dear Community Provider Partners,

As you know, Governor Lee yesterday declared a State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 situation. This declaration positions Tennessee to bring in additional funds from FEMA and temporarily relaxes certain laws to make it easier to respond to the disease. [Link to news release on declaration](#) | [Link to Executive Order](#) | [Video from Governor's News Conference](#). Please know that we will share all updates from the Governor's office as soon as we get them.

In addition, the Governor has issued further guidance for state employees, schools, and mass gatherings. Please see the [news release at this link](#). At this time, TDMHSAS Executive Leadership will be present in the offices and our operations will continue. The guidance for mass gatherings discourages events of 250 people or more as a step in limiting exposure.

During this state of emergency (effective 3/13/2020), TDMHSAS will increase flexibility for community behavioral health contractors related to telehealth services (including the use of telephone for certain services). Effective 3/13/2020 and until further notice, TDMHSAS will allow for a patient's home to serve as a permissible originating site. TDMHSAS contracted providers may use an interactive audio and/or video telecommunications system that permits real-time communication between you at the distant site, and the patient at their home. **All services delivered via expanded telehealth services should be clearly documented in the client's record, including the reasoning telehealth was used as a service delivery method.**

The following TDMHSAS services are eligible for increased flexibility related to telehealth services:

Behavioral Health Safety Net	Substance Abuse Services
Psychiatric Diagnostic Evaluation	Outpatient Individual (adolescent and adult)
Intervention/Therapy/Therapeutic Sessions	Case Management (Addiction Recovery Program, Adolescent Services, and Women Services)
Case Management	Family and Relationship Support – Individual (Adolescent Services and Women Services)
Psycho-Social Rehabilitation	Parenting Support – Individual (Women Services)

Peer Support	Recover Skills Building – Individual (Addiction Recovery Program, Adolescent Services, and Women Services)
Psychiatric Medication Management <i>(Can only be delivered via tele-video. Additional limitations may apply for controlled substances)</i>	Recovery Check-Ups (Adolescent Services and Women Services)
	Employment Skills – Individual (Addiction Recovery Program)
	Pastoral/Spiritual Support – Individual (Addiction Recovery Program)
	Recovery Skills – Individual (Addiction Recovery Program)
	Relapse Prevention – Individual (Addiction Recovery Program)

We also recognize that TDMHSAS funds an assortment of programming *outside* of the Behavioral Health Safety Net and substance abuse services. These programs include various prevention, early intervention, peer support, and recovery support programs. For specific guidance related to COVID-19 and community-based programs funded by the TDMHSAS Division of Mental Health Services, please contact Rob Cotterman at Rob.Cotterman@tn.gov. For specific guidance related to community-based programs funded by TDMHSAS Division of Substance Abuse Services, please contact Taryn Sloss at Taryn.Sloss@tn.gov.

The Tennessee Supreme Court has suspended proceedings, subject to exceptions, in all state and local courts from Friday, March 13, 2020 through Tuesday, March 31, 2020. Recovery Courts should defer to the Presiding Judge for court schedules and activities. [See the court order at this link.](#)

Additionally, we would like to encourage you to stay up to date with the very latest information and precautions from the Tennessee Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control, as we know you will each determine for your agency how you want to move forward to best serve those individuals that are struggling with mental health and substance abuse issues. Here are a couple of links you may find helpful:

Department of Health COVID-19 Update Page: <https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>

Department of Health social media pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/TNDeptofHealth/>

<https://twitter.com/TNDeptofHealth>

CDC Resources: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html?fbclid=IwAR0I2J49LBcZEPm3CnbLDISdfVw29QXT_0KL_aj7vr0IoSGPxy9rUxw4jwg

We know these are anxiety producing times and that we are all doing the best we can with what we know and within our resources. To respond in the most efficient and effective way, we are setting up Monday through Friday open conference calls for any questions or feedback you might have. These will occur at 11:00 a.m. (CDT) / Noon (EDT). Please call in to 615-741-1513 at that time.

If you have any suggestions for how we can continue to support you, I ask that you please email me directly at Marie.Williams@tn.gov.

In closing, everything we do is with a heartfelt commitment to bring the reality of resiliency and recovery to Tennesseans with behavioral health issues. It is an honor and privilege to serve in partnership with you, particularly during challenging times such as these. I thank you for being at the HEART of what we do.

Blessings.

Marie



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