



The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) is committed to serving vulnerable populations every day, and that commitment will not waiver in the face of an emergency. In order to assure protection of those who are in a DHS licensed setting, staff in DHS licensed settings and our DHS licensing staff, DHS will be taking steps to address the current situation.

This communication applies to all facilities licensed by the DHS and includes the following program offices:

- a. Office of Developmental Programs (ODP)
  - b. Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF)
  - c. Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL)
  - d. Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS)
  - e. Office of Long-Term Living/Bureau of Human Service Licensing (BHSL)
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1. From March 16<sup>th</sup> to March 30<sup>th</sup>, DHS will not be conducting any annual licensing inspections. Any inspections scheduled for this timeframe will be completed as soon as possible once normal operations resume.
  2. Licensing staff will continue to conduct on-site investigations for any serious incident or complaint during this time period.
  3. If a facility currently has a provisional license or its revoked license is under appeal, an on-site visit may occur as necessary during this time.
  4. Currently, DHS is not able to send out annual license renewals. As such, if during this time you would have received a renewed license packet then your existing license is still valid.
  5. As previously announced, childcare centers and group childcare homes located outside of a residence must close unless they have applied for a waiver to continue to operate. Group childcare homes located in a residence and family childcare homes may choose to operate without a waiver or may voluntarily close.
  6. In the coming days, DHS will be issuing guidance on specific regulations that will be suspended under the authority of the Governor's Proclamation of Disaster Emergency issued on March 6, 2020, to help providers in dealing with the current emergency and maintain a healthy environment for those they serve and their employees.
  7. DHS is currently and will continue to evaluate future needs and plans for how we will conduct licensing and will support those we license. As we develop this future guidance, we will keep you informed.
  8. As you have questions on any issues, please contact your regional office licensing representative. DHS staff continue to work during this time period, and you should contact the regional office using their phone number or email.
  9. In addition to following the protocol at the Department of Health's website (<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>), if a facility has a person diagnosed with COVID-19, it needs to be reported to your licensing regional offices.