

COVID-19 / RESOURCE KEY UPDATES 3-16-20 through 3-23-20

Allegheny County – COVID-19 Hotline: 1-888-856-2774:

<https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Health-Department/Resources/COVID-19/COVID-19.aspx>

Please visit here for Allegheny County- Information for residents:

<https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Health-Department/Resources/COVID-19/Information-for-Residents.aspx>

Please see the information attached on Testing Facts from the PA Department of Health. You can view more information here as well: <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/PublishingImages/COVID-19%20How%20to%20Get%20Tested.png>

United Way 2-1-1: basic needs inquiries and general COVID-19 inquiries

HOUSING

For your clients concerned about maintaining their housing- please ensure people that during this pandemic, measures have been put in place to help keep people housed and safe:

- HUD has halted all evictions and foreclosures for HUD owned properties: https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/HUD_No_20_042
- PA Supreme Court has halted evictions and foreclosures <http://www.pacourts.us/courts/supreme-court/>

For anyone facing housing crisis concerns or if homeless:

- please refer clients to be in touch with the Allegheny Link at 1-866-730-2368.

If anyone has clients under supportive housing programs, please help them connect to their case managers in those programs for guidance on any housing concerns.

- Supportive Housing Providers have been directed not to terminate any clients in these types of programs and encouraged to contact clients weekly.

Overall, please help clients maintain regular rent payments as best as possible.

UTILITIES

If clients are concerned about keeping their essential utilities on- please let them know the moratorium has been extended, which means there should be no shut offs to occur right now and utilities are being restored. Please see the press release below. Also, some private water municipalities are self-imposing moratoriums. Overall, please encourage clients to reach out to their utility companies directly with questions, concerns, and payment options.

http://www.puc.pa.gov/about_puc/press_releases.aspx?ShowPR=4326

FOOD ACCESS

Many are working to ensure this basic need is met during this time. Here is a map of free food distribution sites in Allegheny County which is updated in real time: <https://tinyurl.com/pghfoodmap>

Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank: <https://www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/covid19/>

- grab and go meals for children at schools listed
- regular distribution sites
- regular pantry hours available
- zip code search for closest pantry
- all distributions are in drive through model

Area Agency on Aging: please have any seniors requesting help for food contact the Senior Line and they will help them get connected to food options: 412-350-5460.

Family Support Centers are closed but some are providing food- please review the list here for any clients who may need to access

food: <http://www.alleghenycountyfamilysupport.org/contact-us/contact-a-center/>

412 Food Rescue: please review information here <https://412foodrescue.org/covid19/>

WIC: Offices are open and accepting applications <https://www.wicprograms.org/co/pa-allegheny>

PUBLIC BENEFITS

All County Assistance Offices are closed to the public during this time but applications will still be processed. Clients can be directed or assisted via COMPASS and also encouraged to use the mobile app:

<https://www.compass.state.pa.us/Compass.Web/Public/CMPHome?preference=mobile>

If any issues, questions, or concerns clients can contact the PA Statewide Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930.

Notice was released March 18th from PA-DHS on measures put in place to support recipients during this time. Please see the document attached for more details. I have included the information pertaining to MA and SNAP here:

CHILDCARE

For those who may have been in contact with people who are in need of childcare options for essential workers during this pandemic- please refer to the [Allegheny County Early Resource Center](https://elrc5.allegHENYcounty.us/about) at 412-350-3577. <https://elrc5.allegHENYcounty.us/about>

Family Support Centers are closed but some are able to provide diapers and formula, have clients call ahead: <http://www.allegHENYcountyfamilysupport.org/contact-us/contact-a-center/>

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

These services are essential services – if your clients are experiencing anxiety (which can exacerbate behavioral health issues) please ensure they are connected to their behavioral health providers or if necessary refer to Resolve Crisis hotline at 1-888-796-8226

FINANCIAL ITEMS

Federal student loan borrowers have the ability to suspend payments for 60 days:

<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/delivering-president-trumps-promise-secretary-devos-suspends-federal-student-loan-payments-waives-interest-during-national-emergency>

Tax deadline has been extended to July 15th:

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/tax-day-now-july-15-treasury-irs-extend-filing-deadline-and-federal-tax-payments-regardless-of-amount-owed>

Please encourage your clients to be in touch with all of their bill payers to find out and discuss payment arrangements or learn about current suspensions to help people bridge the gap if they lost earned income at this time- ex: places like car insurance businesses are placing holds on their cancellations or terminations for periods of time.

Many are in crisis mode and survival mode, but now is also a time to help clients on financial health skills as best as possible to help them prepare for financial matters to consider as time progresses with this crisis situation.

UNEMPLOYMENT/ EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

We know many have lost jobs due to the shutdown of so many businesses and many of you are most likely already assisting people applying for Unemployment Benefits: <https://www.uc.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

We also know our local PA Career Link offices are closed but for clients that are currently registered, case managers are continuing to reach out to them and provide services as necessary. For those not enrolled/connected to a staff member, they can call either number below, or submit the contact request form at: <https://www.careerlinkpittsburgh.com/>

(412) 552-7100 - Downtown Pittsburgh

(412) 436-2225 - Forest Hills

<https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/>

Also Partner 4 Work is making updates to their Facebook page related to current jobs- such as major grocery stores as well as major warehouses and drivers. Or you can review information on their website: <https://www.partner4work.org/>

(I have personally observed information from many local grocery stores increasing their pay to workers to help cover the overall financial hardship during this time).

OTHER INFO/HOTLINES

Neighborhood Legal Services shared information included below concerning resources if someone feels unsafe in their home:

HOME VISITING

We know that all staff are operating as remotely as possible at this time. We still feel the information outlined in this home visiting video may be helpful when it becomes appropriate to adjust operations.

You can view this information here: <https://vimeo.com/398009957>
