


Date: March 24, 2022

To: All DD Waiver, Mi Via Waiver, Medically Fragile Waiver, Supports Waiver, State General Fund Agencies and Stakeholders

From: Jason Cornwell, Director 
Developmental Disabilities Supports Division

Subject: In Person Monitoring Visits and DDSD Core Classroom Trainings resume effective April 1, 2022

The number of individuals testing positive for COVID-19 within programs regulated by DDSD, have steadily declined from January and February, and currently into March 2022. As a result of this steady decline in the number of COVID-19 positive cases, DDSD has determined that it is time to resume in person monitoring visits. Effective April 1, 2022, monitoring visits must resume in person across all four (4) Waiver programs and State General Fund services. DDSD Core Class trainings may resume in person effective April 1, 2022.

Returning to In Person Monitoring Visits:

1. All agencies must have a COVID-19 Safe Practice Plan that includes:
 - Communication.
 - Addressing a COVID-19 outbreak.
 - COVID-19 safe training for employees and sub-contractors.
 - Accessing Personal Protective Equipment for employees and sub-contractors.
 - Alternate plan to complete in person visits when employees and sub-contractors are unable to conduct in-person visits when required.
 - Support for telehealth and teleconferencing based on individual health and safety concerns.
2. Guidance for health care workers applies to DD Waiver and Medically Fragile Waiver Case Managers, Mi Via Waiver Consultants, Supports Waiver Community Support Coordinators, Agency Service Coordinators and Supervisors must include wearing masks throughout the entirety of the in-person visit and should be included in the agency's COVID-19 Safe Practices Plan.
3. Frequency and location of in-person visits must follow applicable Waiver Service Standards. In DD Waiver, when visits during Customized Community Supports and Community Integrated Employment services are provided at home or virtually, count the in-home visit during those hours as a day services visit.
4. Agency COVID-19 Safe Practices Plan must be available to DDSD immediately upon request.

In Person Safeguards

1. In person visits may take a variety of forms depending on risk level and need.
2. Visits must include wearing masks, covering the nose and mouth, throughout the entirety of the visit.

3. In person meetings must include wearing of masks throughout the entirety of the meeting if the individual receiving the service is present.
4. Effective April 1st, 2022; agencies are no longer required to complete COVID-19 symptom screenings at any service location, including community homes and individual residences.

IDTs in person or remote: IDTs can continue to be held in person or via telehealth/video based on the preference of the individual and/or guardian.

Waiver Participant Choice

1. Safety of in person visits must be continually assessed and can change from day to day, week to week and should include the preference of the waiver recipient and their family/guardian.
2. Effective April 1, 2022, if a waiver participant and/or their guardian requests that a required in person visit be conducted telephonically, via telehealth or in a setting other than the setting required, an exception to standards may be submitted to DDS. The exception request will be reviewed within 10 business days. Exception requests should be based on how an in-person visit might jeopardize a waiver participant's health and safety, not the agency or staff person's need.
 - a. Exception requests for the DD Waiver should be submitted directly to your respective Regional Office Director.
 - b. Exception requests for the Mi Via Waiver should be submitted directly to the Mi Via Waiver Program Manager.
 - c. Exception requests for the Supports Waiver should be submitted directly to the Supports Waiver Program Manager.
 - d. Exceptions requests for State General Fund programs should be submitted directly to the State General Fund Program Manager.

DDS Required Core Classroom Training:

Certified agency trainers may conduct DDS Core Classroom trainings in-person effective April 1, 2022. Remote on-line trainings/livestreaming trainings are still allowable. This announcement also rescinds all other memos regarding in-person or face-to-face trainings of DDS Core Classroom courses.

COVID-19 Vaccine "Up to Date" is defined as; if you have completed your initial series and are not yet eligible for your booster. You are also considered up to date if you have completed your initial series and received your booster when eligible.

DDS is requiring that any DD Waiver or Medically Fragile Waiver Case Manager, Mi Via Waiver Consultant, Supports Waiver Community Support Coordinator, Agency Service Coordinator, and/or Supervisor must be "Up to Date" with their COVID-19 vaccine to render in person face to face monitoring visits in any setting for any Waiver or State General Funded service unless an exemption has been granted by the employer.

Public Health Orders:

Public Health Order 081721 now requires that all workers at the congregate care facilities listed below, hospitals, schools and employees in the NM Governor's Office must be up to date on their vaccinations. If any employee is not up to date, they will undergo weekly COVID-19 testing and wear an appropriate mask while at their place of work at all times, unless eating, drinking or they have proof that they were directed otherwise by a licensed healthcare provider. Congregate care settings included in the Public Health Order are:

- Nursing homes
- Assisted living facilities
- **Adult day care**
- Hospice facilities
- Rehabilitation facilities
- State correctional facilities
- Juvenile justice facilities
- NM State Veteran’s Homes
- **Community Homes**

“Adult Day Cares” or Congregate Care Facilities: Defined as any facility based Day or Employment service offered within any of the DD Waiver, Mi Via Waiver, Medically Fragile Waiver, Supports Waiver, or State General Funded programs.

Community Homes: Defined as as any DD Waiver Supported Living, Intensive Medical Living, and State General Funded residential homes. DD Waiver Family Living, DD Waiver Customized In-Home Supports, and Mi Via Waiver In-Home Living Supports does not meet the definition of Community Home.

Each agency is expected to monitor compliance with the current NMDOH Public Health Orders. Any entity who violates the Public Health Order, is subject to civil administrative penalties available at law.

If you have not done so already, DDSD strongly encourages everyone to register to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. In addition, for those who are eligible now to receive the COVID-19 vaccine booster shot, DDSD encourages everyone eligible to register to receive your booster. Together we can limit the opportunities for the virus to spread and by doing so we have a better chance of keeping each other safe.

Free At Home COVID-19 Testing Kits: Please use the following link to order free at home COVID-19 testing kits <https://www.covidtests.gov/>. Every home in the United States is eligible to order four (4) free at-home COVID-19 tests. The tests are completely free. Orders will usually ship in 7-12 days.

Mobile Vaccine Clinics:

Churches, Community Organizations to include Waiver Providers and agencies, neighborhood groups, and others can sign up for Mobile Vaccine Clinics.

- To request a mobile vaccine clinic, go to GetVaxNM.com
- To request promotional support for your event, go to BetterTogetherNM.com

Additional Resources:

- NM DOH COVID-19 Site: <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>
- DDSD COVID-19 Site: <https://nmhealth.org/about/ddsd/diro/ddcv/>
- NM DOH COVID-19 Safe Practices: <https://cv.nmhealth.org/covid-safe-practices/>
- Report a Public Health Order Violation: <https://www.newmexico.gov/2020/03/25/how-to-report-non-compliance-within-a-business-a-violation-of-the-mass-gatherings-ban-or-other-violations-of-the-public-order/>
- NM DOH COVID-19 Vaccine General Information: <https://cv.nmhealth.org/covid-vaccine/>
- NM DOH COVID-19 Vaccine Site: <https://cgvaccine.nmhealth.org/>

- New Mexico Notify [NM Notify | Help New Mexico Stop The Spread](#)
- Vault COVID-19 Testing Resource learn.vaulthealth.com/nm/
- COVID-19 testing at Curative sites, which can be located through the NMDOH website: <https://findatestnm.org/>
- New Mexico Crisis and Access Line | www.nmcrisisline.com
- Crisis and Access Line | 1-855-NMCRISIS | 1-855-662-7474
- Peer-to-Peer Warmline | 1-855-4NM-7100 | 1-855-466-7100
- Healthcare Worker and First Responder Support Line | 1-855-507-5509
- Link to free at home testing kits <https://www.covidtests.gov/>

As a reminder, any Tribal orders issued supersede requirements in this memo.

If you have questions, please contact the following DDSD Staff:

- DD Waiver Program Manager, Marie Velasco (marie.velasco@state.nm.us)
- Mi Via Waiver Program Manager, Elaine Hill (elaine.hill@state.nm.us)
- Medically Fragile Waiver Program Manager, Iris Clevenger (iris.clevenger@state.nm.us)
- Supports Waiver Program Manager, Jennifer Roth (jennifer.roth@state.nm.us)
- State General Fund Program Manager, Juanita Salas (juanita.salas@state.nm.us)
- Training Manager, Teresa Tomashot (teresa.tomashot@state.nm.us)
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The banner features the NMDOH logo on the left, which includes the text 'NMDOH' and 'NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'. To the right of the logo, the text reads: 'Do you want to pre-register for your COVID-19 Vaccine? Visit cvvaccine.nmhealth.org to register today.'