

From: DHHR WV BTT Information <dhhrrwvbtinfo@wv.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2020 2:55 PM
Subject: Approval For Use of Additional Communication Technologies
Importance: High

Dear WV Birth to Three Practitioners,

Over the past few days, WV Birth to Three has received several requests to allow additional video communication technologies to be used in the provision of virtual early intervention services. On March 17, 2020, the US Department of Health and Human Resources released the "Notification of Enforcement Discretion for telehealth remote communications during the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency" bulletin allowing health care providers to use **non-public facing** remote communication technologies without fear of penalty. At that time, WV Birth to Three approved the use of any **non-public facing** HIPAA Compliant technology as these applications offer families and the provider the highest of confidentiality protections.

Effective March 24, 2020, WV Birth to Three will allow our practitioners to use these additional **non-public facing** applications including, Zoom, Skype, Apple Face Time, Facebook Messenger Video Chat or Google Hangouts video. Please read carefully, things you should consider when making a choice to use a non- HIPAA Compliant technology:

1. Each practitioner is responsible for first checking with their licensing board and with your liability insurance carrier to insure your board approves of the use of the technology you are selecting and that your insurance carrier will cover you in case of a formal complaint.
2. Prior to using any of the additional technologies, you must inform the family that these third -party applications may potentially introduce privacy risks and to insure the family that you are enabling all available encryption and privacy modes when using the application. For more information, please visit the training resources for the application you are selecting.
3. Be an informed practitioner. A practitioner should NEVER ask a family to become a Facebook friend or accept a friend request from a family. Many licensing boards and professional associations site becoming Facebook friends as a potential ethical violation which could lead to termination of your license to practice.

We hope this information will help you in making the best decision for you and the families you serve. Please call or email your Regional Technical Assistance Specialist if you have questions.

Sincerely,

The WV Birth to Three State Office