



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES
Bureau for Public Health

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Cabinet Secretary

Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health

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Commissioner & State Health Officer

MEMORANDUM

To: Family Planning Providers

From: Cathy Capps-Amburgey, Director
Family Planning Program

Date: March 25, 2020

Re: Continuing COVID-19 Guidance

The West Virginia Family Planning Program (FPP) issues this Memorandum to provide necessary continuing guidance on how to proceed with offering clinical services during this current health crisis. Our first response is to again remind you to follow the recommendations of the CDC along with those that have been presented by our State and Federal government officials. Attached to the email with this Memorandum is the latest WV Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR) COVID-19 Testing Criteria. You can also locate the most up-to-date testing information on the [WVDHHR COVID-19 Response website \(https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx\)](https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx). We must continue doing what we're already doing, exercising the best possible sanitization protocols, practicing social distancing, and not taking any unnecessary risks! As of right now, we have the following guidance to pass along to you and we will update you with information as quickly as possible when we receive it.

- First and foremost, for your own protection and that of your patients, you **must**:
 - Wash your hands between every face-to-face encounter and regularly otherwise. Hand washing must be completed for a full 20 seconds with warm water and soap. You can also use an alcohol-based hand-sanitizer but hand washing is preferred to sanitizer. If you do have to use sanitizer, you must use the amount listed on the package directions for use and rub your hands together until they are completely dry.
 - Remove all jewelry, watches (including smart watches) and fitbits (or similar). These collect and harbor germs and infection.
 - Wear scrubs or easily washable clothes that can be removed at home (in a mud room/laundry room) so that you can change/shower before interacting with other household members.
- If your clinic is staying open, assess each client for COVID-19 exposure:
 - Do they have a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing?

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If they are present at the clinic and coughing, put a mask on them **before** screening for any other information.

- Have they traveled outside of the state recently?
 - Have they traveled outside of the country recently?
- Try to screen patients by telephone as much as possible and all clients who have answered yes to any of the questions above or who are exhibiting symptoms, with non-essential appointments, will need to reschedule at least three months out.
- When you do have patients for visits, do not allow others to accompany the client to their visit (unless they require an interpreter or there is some other mitigating circumstance like disability or an adolescent who requests a family member).
- If you have telehealth capability, use it. Facetime has been approved for telehealth at this time but remember that your number will **not** be blocked.
- Triage as much as possible via telephone or video (call in prescriptions, determine if face-to-face is needed, etc.)
- Provide a minimum three-month supply of contraception whenever possible. You can meet the patient at the door or bring supplies to their vehicle to prevent unnecessary contact.
- New patients can be seen with telehealth, or can come to the office, complete their paperwork, hand it in at the door or have staff collect it “curbside.” At the discretion of the clinician, after reviewing the intake paperwork for any contraindication, it is acceptable to provide three-months of contraception (Oral Contraceptive Pills, Nuvaring, or Xulane) and schedule an appointment three months out. Note: The FPP Medical Director, Dr. Jennie Yoost, encourages all providers to rule out absolute contraindications to estrogens (migraine with aura, history of dvt/PE, hypertension, etc.)
- Follow measures to reduce the exposure and transmission of COVID-19
 - Patients who must come in for essential visits must still practice social distancing. Limit the number of people in the waiting room. Advise patients to come alone to their appointment, advise and post signage that states patients must always stand at least 6 feet from the check-in desk and other patients. Place chairs in the waiting area 6 feet apart, as well.
 - Provide hand sanitizer for clients and post signage that states they must rub their hands together until dry.
 - Fully sanitize all treatment surfaces with Hospital-grade Germicide before and after **every** use.
 - Assign staff the task of sanitizing regularly handled areas (e.g., iPads, doorknobs, chairs, etc.) throughout the day.
 - Suggest that higher-risk clients (e.g., patients with asthma or other breathing issues, immunocompromised) call to let clinic staff know when they arrive but wait in their vehicles until they are notified it is safe to come inside.
 - Consider developing front-door and office signage that informs patients and visitors of these measures.
- If you are closing your clinic, you must post appropriate notification (signage) on your clinic door(s) to advise clients where the nearest FPP clinic(s) are located (i.e., provide a list of all clinics within a 15-mile radius.) You can utilize the “Find a Family Planning

Clinic” tool on the bottom of the program website: www.wvdhhr.org/fp to obtain this information. You must also provide the program website address on the client notification along with the toll-free FPP number (1-800-642-8522). If your phones will also be closed, you must include this information on your voicemail notification.

We have another call on March 27, 2020 with the Office of Population Affairs to obtain more information. If we learn new or different information, we will pass that to you as quickly as possible. We know some of the questions you have asked have not yet been answered and we apologize for the delay. Unfortunately, as you know, almost every health office in the world is consumed with the COVID-19 pandemic and response times are slower than usual but we have passed the questions to our Title X regional director and as soon as we receive any answers, we will let you know. We thank you for your continued service to the program and ask for your patience as we continue navigate this crisis.

CCA/kh