



## **IN-PERSON SERVICES INFORMATION & GUIDELINES FOR CLIENTS, FAMILIES, AND STAKEHOLDERS**

*Updated: 11/18/20*

HCRS has continued to provide essential in-person services since COVID-19 first presented. As we have learned more about the virus and ways to reduce the risk of spreading infection, including physical distancing and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), an increased number of in-person services are safely taking place. Identifying whether services will be in-person, virtual, or a combination of both is decided with a client and their team of support. Service decisions are individualized based on each client's needs.

As HCRS provides in-person services, whether in HCRS offices or in the community, the health of clients and staff is most important. All HCRS staff providing in-person services participate in a health screening every morning before they meet with a client. Clients also participate in a health screening prior to their in-person appointment. The health screening questions are the same for staff and clients and are listed below.

If both the HCRS staff member and the client are not experiencing symptoms linked with COVID-19, have had no known contact with someone with COVID-19, and have not recently traveled to an area determined to be of high risk for COVID-19 infection, in-person services can take place as scheduled.

Staff will follow the health and safety guidelines listed below when they are providing in-person services:

- The service is provided outdoors whenever possible;
- Hand sanitizer is used by the staff member when they arrive for the appointment and as soon as the service ends;
- Staff will maintain at least six feet between them and the client, except when brief contact is necessary for the client's safety and service delivery;
- Staff and client will wear a clean cloth face covering or mask, covering from the chin to above the nose. If a client has a medical or sensory reason for not being able to wear a face mask, alternate safety measures will be identified as a team and used; and
- Staff will make every effort to not touch highly touched surfaces. When staff do need to make contact with a highly touched surface, they will use hand sanitizer immediately after touching the surface.

### **Health Screening Tool**

Before an appointment with a client, staff will ask the client or, as appropriate, the client's family member/guardian/shared living provider (SLP), if the client has experienced any of the following within the last 72 hours:

- A positive COVID-19 test, or a COVID-19 test they are waiting for results on

- Fever or chills (a fever is 100.4 degrees or more)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
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- Finally, clients will also be asked if they have traveled within the past two weeks to an area identified as having a high risk for COVID-19 infection at the time they were there. Currently, all areas outside of Vermont are considered high risk for non-essential travel. The Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) map may be used again in the future to identify areas that have a high risk for COVID-19 infection (<https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>).

**The following guidelines are followed whenever a client:**

- Is experiencing symptoms linked with COVID-19,
- Has had contact with someone with COVID-19, or
- Has recently traveled to an area identified as having a high risk for COVID-19 infection.

These guidelines will help determine the next steps for monitoring the client's health and returning to in-person HCRS services.

- The client or, as appropriate, family/guardian/SLP tells the HCRS provider that the client is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, has potentially been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or has recently traveled to an area posing high risk for COVID-19.
  - It is helpful if this notification is done as early as possible after experiencing symptoms, being potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19, or traveling/planning travel to an area posing high risk for COVID-19.
  - At the latest, the HCRS provider must be notified at the time of the health screening on the day of the in-person service.
- The scheduled in-person appointment will be done through virtual services. If virtual services are not a good option for the client, the appointment is rescheduled once in-person services are safe to re-start.
- **The timing of the start of signs/symptoms, possible contact with someone with COVID-19, or travel will help determine when it is safe to return to in-person services.**

- **IF COVID-19 IS SUSPECTED**, the client will be asked to contact their health care provider for a medical evaluation or recommendations.
  - The HCRS provider may refer the client for testing. The client should remain home while awaiting any test results. If positive, a Health Department contact tracer will reach out to the client to walk them through what to do next.
  - **IF TESTING IS NOT RECOMMENDED OR THE CLIENT CHOOSES NOT TO BE TESTED**, they will not be able to participate in in-person services until:
    - Their fever has gone away for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, and other symptoms (like cough or shortness of breath) have improved
    - AND –
    - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- If a client is sick due to **SOMETHING OTHER THAN COVID-19**, in-person services are stopped until:
  - They are without a fever for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medications (if a fever was one of the concerns)
  - AND –
  - Any other symptoms have resolved or are improving
  - \*A doctor's note may be requested in support of the symptoms being due to something other than COVID-19.*
- If a client **TRAVELED TO AN AREA WITH HIGH RATES OF COVID-19 INFECTION**:
  - They should follow the state of Vermont's recommended self-quarantine.
  - The client may return to in-person services after completing the recommended 14-day self-quarantine, which starts the day after they get home from their travels.
  - If a client chooses to take a COVID-19 test at day 7, and the results come back negative, they may re-start in-person services upon notifying their HCRS provider of the negative test results.
- If a client has **CONTACT WITH SOMEONE ELSE BELIEVED TO HAVE COVID-19**:

- A client who has had contact with someone believed to have COVID-19 should immediately quarantine at home according to Vermont guidelines and may not participate in HCRS in-person services. Contact is defined as being within 6 feet of the person with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more.
- If the individual believed to have COVID-19 tests negative, the quarantine for the client can end and they may participate in in-person services.
- If there is no known test result for the individual believed to have COVID-19, the client should quarantine for 14 days and cannot return to in-person services for 14 days.
- If a client chooses to take a COVID-19 test at day 7 and the results come back negative, they may re-start in-person services after receiving and notifying their HCRS provider about the negative test results.

### **Additional Guidelines for Day and Overnight Respite**

In order to provide respite services, the respite provider and client may not reside in a county (within or outside of Vermont) that is represented on the current Vermont travel map as having over 400 active cases of COVID-19 per million people. The travel map may be accessed at <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>.

In addition to using the travel map to determine whether day/overnight respite can be provided, HCRS staff will provide a health screening for the client AND the respite provider as well as all members of both households. In addition, no respite will be permitted if any member of either household is:

- Regularly travelling to a RED or YELLOW area on the travel map and/or has travelled to one of these counties for an overnight within the last two weeks
- Has had known exposure to an individual infected with COVID-19

If any of these variables are true, respite will be rescheduled for a time at least two weeks after the occurrence.