



March 19, 2020

Dear Foster Parents,

The health and safety of our children, staff, and families is our top priority at The Baby Fold. Because of the national attention focused on the Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, we want to update you on our Foster Care program's efforts to protect children, staff, and families.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) describes COVID-19 as a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Symptoms include fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Children seem to be less likely to become ill. Public health officials project more cases may occur across the United States but the risk to Central Illinois is still considered low at this point.

Illinois Department of Public Health is closely monitoring the progress of the illness and is following the advice of the CDC. Staff will be practicing good hygiene routines and we encourage you to do the same. Washing your hands regularly with soap for 20 seconds is the best way to stop the transmission of the virus.

In order to keep everyone safe, these good practices are encouraged to prevent viral spread of illness at home, school and community:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds – two rounds of the Happy Birthday song – is best. An alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol is a suitable alternative.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands immediately (if you do not have a tissue, use your sleeve and not your hands).
- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Anyone who is sick (with symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath) should consult with their health care provider and stay home from school or work until their symptoms resolve.
- Missed in-office appointments that are canceled ahead of time will not count against any attendance policies.
- Parents/guardian of children with chronic health conditions (i.e. asthma) should work with their health care provider to ensure any necessary rescue and controller medicines are on hand and take special care to keep the illness well managed and under control.
- Follow social distance guidelines. "Social distancing" is defined as maintaining a physical distance of approximately 6 feet for 10 minutes or longer when interacting with others to limit the spread of contagious disease. Our agency operations will continue in compliance with social distancing practices, which will require using a combination of the following:
 - Our service delivery is somewhat more reliant on telecommunications (phone, email, Skype, etc.),
 - We are convening internal meetings that allow for participants to comply with Social Distancing standards, and

- Limiting the number of staff in designated work areas by assigning alternating on-campus work schedules so Social Distancing standards can be maintained.

We have begun a process with program directors, managers, and supervisors to make more detailed plans within their departmental area to provide opportunities for some staff to work remotely as their job duties may allow, and to maintain social distancing standards for onsite duties and in the presence of clients. Individuals who cannot perform their job duties from another location will continue to report to work at their usual location.

According to local health officials, no special disinfection products are recommended at this time. Illinois Department of Public Health and federal authorities may issue new guidance and we will keep you updated on changes and the impact on our programs.

For the most up-to-date resources and reliable information, please visit:

- www.cdc.gov/coronavirus
- www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html
- <http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-zlist/coronavirus>

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact your case manager, supervisor or licensing representative directly.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dianne Schultz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dianne Schultz, President and CEO