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Subject: VDSS Division of Licensing Programs Onsite Inspections - COVID-19 Safety and Health Precautions
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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: December 9, 2020

TO: All Providers

FROM: Tara Ragland, Director, Division of Licensing Programs

RE: **VDSS Division of Licensing Programs Onsite Inspections - COVID-19 Safety and Health Precautions**

Throughout the ongoing COVID 19 public health emergency, VDSS is committed to making the protection of the health and safety of our staff and community partners a top priority. The agency has taken great care to ensure that our employees' in-person interactions are limited in scope and are implemented following both federal and state guidance at both their own physical worksites, and also in the physical worksites of other agencies and childcare community partners. The agency and the Division of Licensing Programs (DOLP) recognizes and understands that the health and safety of your employees and the populations you serve are also your highest priority.

In response to COVID-19, the majority of DOLP inspections are being conducted through a virtual and/or a desk review process as a means of limiting in-person interaction in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and support community health. However, there may be times when a licensing inspector must be physically present in a facility in order to conduct inspections related to situations involving serious health and safety concerns, inspections of programs seeking initial licensure, and other situations identified by the department that necessitate an onsite inspection. Attached, you will find the DOLP COVID-19 Onsite Inspection Safety Protocol and DOLP COVID-19 Safety Expectations and Screening Form. Providing a clear understanding of expectations for onsite inspections by DOLP, will ensure that the appropriate steps are taken to consider the safety and health of all persons involved during inspections and to minimize the spread of the virus.

Safety Expectations for Onsite Inspections:

- On the date of the onsite inspection and/or prior to, the inspector conducting the inspection will identify a point of contact at the facility and provide the DOLP COVID-19 Safety Expectations and Screening Form. The facility contact shall ensure that all facility personnel who will be present during the

inspection have pre-screened with the questions below. An answer of “yes” to any of the questions will result in termination of the inspection.

- During the inspection, a minimal number of personnel shall be present in the area where the licensing inspector is working. The personnel who will be present during the onsite inspection will be agreed upon by licensing staff and the provider prior to the inspection.
- If present, members of the general public shall be asked to leave the area during the inspection.

Along with following all other guidance described in the attached VDSS DOLP COVID-19 Onsite Inspection Protocol, the licensing inspector will:

- Utilize the same COVID-19 screening questions to pre-screen themselves prior to conducting the inspection. If the inspector answers “yes” to any of the questions, the inspection will be cancelled in advance.
- Maintain a physical distance of at least six feet or greater from individuals while onsite. It is expected that any facility personnel or others present onsite will do the same.
- Wear a face covering or any other required personal protective equipment (PPE) for the entire duration of the visit. It is expected that any facility personnel, or others who will be present during the inspection, will also wear a face covering for the entire duration of the inspection.
- Limit the items brought into the facility to only what is necessary.
- Stop the inspection and leave the premises immediately if there is a failure by the facility to comply with safety expectations or requests/reminders to observe safety expectations.

Your licensing inspector may reach out to you in the future to review your facility’s established COVID-19 health and safety protocols to ensure the inspector is familiar with and can easily follow them, prior to and during the inspection. If you have any questions related to this memo, you may contact [the regional licensing office](#) that serves your location.

VDSS Division of Licensing Programs COVID-19 Onsite Inspection Safety Protocol

Protection Before, During, and After the Inspection:

- Licensing Inspectors will wear the level of Personal Protective Equipment determined to be necessary for the inspection. This determination will be made based by utilizing the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry's (VDOLI) Exposure Risk Assessment procedure.
 - If a determination is made that the tasks completed and/or hazards present are Lower or Medium Exposure Risk, a face covering shall be worn. If tasks/hazards are determined to be High Exposure Risk, the inspector will wear gloves, a gown, a face shield or goggles, and a [NIOSH-approved respirator](#).
 - Licensing field staff may also substitute the NIOSH-approved respirator for the face covering, or wear any of the PPE that has been made available to them for High Exposure Risk scenarios (gown, gloves, respirator, and face shield) if it is preferred or needed.
 - PPE should be donned **before** entering the inspection area.
 - Please reference this [CDC infographic](#) for instruction on how to appropriately don and doff PPE.
- Be careful when putting on and taking off face coverings.
 - Don't touch the face covering while wearing it.
 - Don't touch your face, mouth, nose, or eyes while taking off the covering.
 - Wash your hands before putting on and after taking off the covering.
 - Dispose of single-use face covering after each use.
 - Wash cloth face coverings after each use, and dispose of them if they are ripped/torn or no longer fit appropriately.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from workers, customers, the general public, and coworkers, when possible.
 - Schedule inspections when there are fewer workers or other people at the facility, if possible.
 - Follow CDC recommendations for travel if you must travel to conduct the inspections.
 - Do not shake hands with personnel or others in the facilities.
- Be aware of contact with frequently touched surfaces.
 - Avoid touching your mouth, nose, or eyes when handling frequently touched items.
 - Only bring necessary equipment to an inspection to minimize the number of items that need to be cleaned and disinfected afterwards.
 - Use folders or envelopes to segregate paper records from other materials.
- Hand Hygiene
 - Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol, if soap and water aren't available.
 - Wash your hands at these key times:
 - Before, during, and after preparing food.
 - Before eating food.
 - After using the toilet.
 - Using restrooms within the facility is not recommended.
 - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - After putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings.
 - Before and after work and work breaks.
 - After touching surfaces such as desks, door handles, clipboards, pens, cameras, cell phones, laptops, keyboards, or electronic tablets.



- Do not touch your face, mouth, nose, or eyes.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
 - Use tissues to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
 - Throw used tissues in the trash.
- PPE should be doffed/removed **as soon as possible** after completion of the inspection.
 - Do not enter a vehicle wearing the gown or gloves.
 - Please reference this [CDC infographic](#) for the sequence for donning and doffing PPE.
- Reference CDC guidance on [Travel during COVID-19](#) for more information on safety practices for vehicles, gas stations, hotels, and other related environments when traveling for inspections.
- For electronics, field tools, and documents:
 - Electronics and tools (folders, clipboards, pens, etc.) taken into the facility should be minimized. All documents that would generally be created and distributed onsite should be sent electronically once you have left the premises.
 - Clean the surfaces of tools using accepted industry practices.
 - Wipe down all shared pens, clipboards, phones, or other equipment with sanitizing wipes after and prior to each use. If possible, bring your own tools and do not share them with others.
 - If you usually require someone to sign documentation, have them use their own pens. If they do not have their own pen, provide a pen and allow them to keep it.

Reminders about Observing Safety Expectations or Stopping an Inspection:

- ✓ Reminders may include, but are not limited to:
 - Remind facility personnel or members of the public to create physical distance.
 - Remind facility personnel or members of the public to wear a face covering prior to entry.
 - Ask facility personnel or members of the public to adjust a face covering if it is not worn properly (below nose, not over chin, etc.).
 - Ask facility personnel or members of the public to not enter or leave an area of the facility due to the size of the area not allowing for appropriate physical distances.
- ✓ Stop the inspection, leave the premises immediately, and contact a supervisor if
 - Any of the workers or members of the public at the facility appear ill; or
 - There is a failure by the facility to comply with safety expectations or requests/reminders to observe safety expectations.

VDSS Division of Licensing Programs COVID-19 Safety Expectations and Screening Form

Safety Expectations for Onsite Inspections:

- On the date of the onsite inspection and/or prior to, the inspector conducting the inspection will identify a point of contact at the facility and provide this form. The facility contact shall ensure that all facility personnel who will be present during the inspection have pre-screened with the questions below. An answer of “yes” to any of the questions will result in termination of the inspection.
- During the inspection, a minimal number of personnel shall be present in the area where the licensing inspector is working. The personnel who will be present during the onsite inspection will be agreed upon by licensing staff and the provider prior to the inspection.
- If present, members of the general public shall be asked to leave the area during the inspection.

The licensing inspector will follow all guidance described in the VDSS DOLP COVID-19 Onsite Inspection Protocol previously provided to the facility AND:

- Utilize the same COVID-19 screening questions to pre-screen themselves prior to conducting the inspection. If the inspector answers “yes” to any of the questions, the inspection will be cancelled in advance.
- Maintain a physical distance of at least six feet or greater from individuals while onsite. It is expected that any facility personnel or others present onsite will do the same.
- Wear a face covering or any other required personal protective equipment for the entire duration of the visit. It is expected that any facility personnel, or others who will be present during the inspection, will also wear a face covering for the entire duration of the inspection.
- Limit the items brought into the facility to only what is necessary.
- Stop the inspection and leave the premises immediately if there is a failure by the facility to comply with safety expectations or requests/reminders to observe safety expectations.

DOLP COVID-19 Screening Questions:

1. Have any of the personnel who will be present experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 48 hours?
 - Fever or Chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of Breath; Difficulty Breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle/Body Aches
 - Headache
 - Sore Throat
 - Congestion or Runny Nose
 - Nausea or Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - New Loss of Taste or Smell
2. Within the past 14 days, have any of the personnel who will be present been in close physical contact (6 feet or closer for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more in a 24 hour period) with a person with an infected person?
3. Are any personnel who will be present isolating or quarantining because you may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 or are worried that you may be sick with COVID-19?
4. Are any personnel who will be present currently waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test?