



March 18, 2020

## COVID-19 Update

Dear HMRF Grantees,

Thank you for all you do to serve families, fathers, and youth today and every day! We especially appreciate your continued engagement and partnership with us to address and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. We highly value our strong ongoing partnership and hope to continue to be a resource to you as you implement community mitigation techniques.

**This email contains important guidance – please read it closely.**

### **Follow Guidance of National, State, and Local Public Health Officials**

In Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF), we recognize that every community is different. For example, an approach to providing curriculum to fathers/families/youth in one community won't necessarily work in another. Similarly, **grantees must follow the guidance of national, state, and local public health officials and make the best choices for themselves and those who rely on their services on issues related to preparing for COVID-19 in their organizations and communities.**

You should be aware that on March 16, the White House released "[The President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America](#)" which states, in part, that we should "avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10 people" as part of a 15-day strategy designed to slow the spread of COVID-19. As such, this serves as federal guidance and should be followed, in addition to any state or local guidance you've received.

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Wherever possible, grantees should explore other options to deliver services, such as virtual workshops or individual case management phone calls. Of course, as mentioned earlier, every community is different, so approaches to delivering services may be more or less constrained given your community context and state or local guidance. Still, from what we have seen in emails in recent days, we are heartened with your dedication to serve our clientele despite these challenges, and we are exceptionally impressed by your creativity and resourcefulness in identifying ways to continue services.

### **Tell Us about Changes to Your Programming**

We ask that if your grant program is experiencing a substantive change in service prompted by COVID-19 (e.g., suspension of services or decreases in participation), that you please complete [this fillable PDF form](#) and return it to your Federal Program Specialist (FPS). For those of you who have previously sent this information to your FPS by email, we also request that you resend that information using this form. That way we will be sure to have consistency in information gathered and uniformity in our responses. Please use the form to explicitly address the four items listed below. This communication will serve to document your challenges and successes. You can be confident that we are tracking your responses.

1. The "what," that is, describe what is happening to your services, using numbers if possible;
2. The "why," that is, provide a succinct explanation of why services are being impacted (for example, due to a decision by your agency's officials or by local or state officials);
3. The "what next," that is, describe what alternatives you are pursuing to mitigate the challenge, such as moving classes to be virtual; and
4. The "what else," that is, confirm which of the other services funded by your grant are continuing as planned.

### **Remain Reachable**

Finally, to ensure that you receive important grant-related guidance and updates during the COVID-19 mitigation process, **HMRF grantee Authorizing Officials and Program Directors are required to remain available to their assigned FPS.** Please take a moment to ensure that your current contact information will remain the same. If, for

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example, email or phone services will be suspended at your organization, it is your obligation to provide alternate contact information. You can provide this information in the same form mentioned above and accessible [here](#).

Thank you for all you do to build stronger, healthier families!

*Robin Y. McDonald, Division Director*

*Seth F. Chamberlain, Branch Chief*

*Office of Family Assistance*

You are receiving this email because you are an HMRF grantee or federal staff.



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