



Director-General's COVID-19 UPDATE

Deidre Mulkerin | Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

8 April 2020

Dear Colleagues

First of all, can I thank you for the way you have supported our children and families and each other as we work to provide essential services in such a difficult and fast-moving environment.

I know you have been receiving regular communiques from your regional contacts and, following feedback, we have now decided these will come from me.

Since COVID-19 hit, affecting so many aspects of our lives, we've called on you to make major changes to the way you work with vulnerable Queenslanders and how your business operates.

There are many children, families and women counting on us to be there to support them and help keep them safe during this difficult time.

I appreciate all you are doing to work with us and with each other to make sure this happens.

This week, I wanted to update you on residential care services and some new resources and information available.

Residential care services

On Monday (6 April), representatives of the department and more than 70 organisations that support young people in residential care met to workshop issues the residential care sector is facing.

The meeting discussed business continuity planning, industrial relations and workforce issues, and how best to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people as the COVID-19 situation develops. It also highlighted the extensive work underway across the sector and a high level of collaboration between organisations.

We will continue to work with the sector and provide further guidance on these issues as it becomes available.

Managing and renewing contracts

Although we are operating under quite different circumstances to usual, we are continuing to follow 'business as usual' processes when it comes to renewal of contracts to promote continuity of service delivery beyond the current crisis.

We can automatically renew contracts for 12 months if your or our business continuity is affected. However, in most instances we will seek to renew your contracts for the usual periods, generally three to five years, as we are mindful that you need longer term assurances to keep and recruit staff.

If your services are affected by COVID-19 and you need emergency advance funding to continue essential service delivery, please make a written request for this through your Contract Manager. If you are experiencing any difficulty in meeting your deliverables, including reporting, contact your Contract Manager and they will be able to assist you.

Children with disability in care

There may have been some angst in the community around the status of NDIS planning meetings and supports for children with disability during COVID-19.

The NDIS has committed to continue NDIS planning and review meetings, and to work with providers and participants so disability supports continue.

We've added some information to our [website](#) on how NDIS plans and supports are being adjusted to ensure that children and young people continue to get help and stay safe. The [NDIS website](#) is also a great source of up-to-date information and resources.

Infection control training

The Australian Department of Health is offering [free online training](#) on infection control. The training module covers the fundamentals of infection prevention and control for COVID-19, including:

- COVID-19 – what is it?
- signs and symptoms
- keeping safe – protecting yourself and others
- myth busting.

The site also has COVID-19 [fact sheets and posters](#) available for downloading.

Find out more

I recognise that each day you probably face a raft of new questions about how to manage the impact of COVID-19 on your business. We are trying to answer many of these questions as they arise, and have listed them on the [COVID-19 page on our website](#).

We're regularly adding to these questions so please keep checking the page.

We are all certainly going through an unsettling time. Thank you for your professionalism, your dedication and your passion to ensure the safety of Queenslanders.

And, although this Easter break will most probably look very different to the one you were planning earlier this year, I hope it's relaxing and gives you time to recharge for the work ahead.

Warm regards

Deidre Mulkerin
Director-General

Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

