

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

(For the week of 4/6/2020 to 4/11/2020)

Statewide Telehealth/Mental Health Programs

Q: Who is eligible for the statewide telehealth services hotline? How can I sign up?

A: A person is eligible if they are showing COVID-19 symptoms, or is at a high risk of contracting the virus, but does not require emergency or inpatient care, and can be digitally monitored at home.

The OSF Hotline number is now available: (833) 673-5669. More information can be found at www.osfhealthcare.org

Q: What services are provided through the telehealth services hotline?

A: Pandemic Health Workers (PHWs) will virtually visit recipients daily, deliver wellness kits that include essential tools to monitor their health, and follow-up over a 14-day period to ensure no further assistance is needed. Wellness kits will include items such as thermometers, pulse oximeters, blood pressure cuffs, and alcohol wipes.

Q: Where can I access the statewide mental health support hotline (Call4Calm) the Governor announced?

A: The Department of Human Services launched a free emotional support text line, for Illinois residents experiencing stress and mental health issues related to COVID-19. Individuals who would like to speak with a mental health professional can text:

- For English text “TALK” to 5-5-2-0-2-0
- For Spanish text “HABLAR” to 5-5-2-0-2-0
- Individuals can also text key words such as “unemployment” or “food” or “shelter” and will receive information on how to access these services.

Business Compliance

Q: Where can I report a non-essential business who remains open?

A: If you believe that a business is violating Executive Order-10, as extended by Executive Order-18, which requires all non-essential businesses cease all activity except working from home, you may submit a complaint to:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/da22b3bda11940338dc00628e56486fd>

Q: Would the Governor consider allowing restaurants to serve unprepared food through their carry-out service?

A: Restaurants should discuss this with their local health departments to ensure they are following food safety guidelines.

Child Care Funding

Q: What type of funding is being offered for the Emergency Child Care Funding Program?

A: There is a one-time stipend for former licensed family care homes and child care centers opting to provide care for Essential workers. Emergency child care programs that serve CCAP eligible families will receive a 30% add on to the usual CCAP rate for April services.

Q: What child care programs are eligible for funding?

A: Programs who meet all eligibility criteria and are operating within the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) guidelines for emergency child care have the option to apply for funding.

Education:

K – 12 Education

Q: Can there be a waiver from ISBE to allow driver education behind the wheel course to continue? Private drivers ed facilities are continuing but there are students who must complete driving hours and are unable to.

A: The classroom portion of a driver education program may be completed through remote/distance learning, but the 6-hour behind the wheel portion of driver education programs must be suspended for the duration of the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction. At this time, the permit test is not able to be taken online.

Higher Education

Q: Teachers have professional development (PD) requirements to complete in order to renew their licenses for a new five-year cycle. Since, many of these opportunities are being cancelled or postponed a year due to the coronavirus, the PD plans many of them made are in limbo. Is there a plan to extend the deadlines for renewing their license?

A: Illinois is investigating opportunities to provide temporary extensions of renewal dates of licenses and will provide more information about this issue as it becomes available.

Q: Are dual-credit courses still being taught?

A: For courses taught by either a high school instructor or college instructor, the class must be moved to an online platform and students should still receive credit for that course. For more information visit:

https://www.ibhe.org/pdf/Joint_Dual_Credit_Guidance_During_Suspension_of_In-Person_Instruction-IBHE_%20ICCB_%20ISBE%203.27.2020.pdf

Food Shortages

Q: Is there any help that can be provided to the Northern Illinois Food Bank and specifically individual food pantries to help them get more food?

A: The Greater Chicago Food Bank can provide assistance to nearby food pantries. For more information visit: <http://www.chicagosfoodbank.org/contact/>

Firearms/ISP

Q: Can the Governor issue an Executive Order stating that all expired FOIDS from the renewal date ISP is working on at present (may be October 2019 renewals right now) to expire FOIDS as of the current date are valid and shall be accepted as valid by all entities?

A: The Illinois State Police (ISP) is aware of concerns being expressed during this pandemic related to FOID and Conceal and Carry License (CCL) expirations. ISP reminds FOID and CCL holders that their cards will remain valid during the renewal process once a renewal application is submitted. ISP is continuing to seek a legal remedy to address expirations during this time.

Q: Can CCL holders renew their licenses without the class requirement, since classes are canceled due to COVID-19?

A: ISP is aware of concerns being expressed during this pandemic related to FOID and CCL expirations. ISP reminds FOID and CCL holders that their cards will remain valid during the renewal process once a renewal application is submitted. ISP is continuing to seek a legal remedy to address expirations during this time.

Funeral Services

Q: With the increase of deaths in Illinois, will embalmer interns' license restrictions be lifted?

A: Per Executive Order-22, Section 10-35 of the Funeral Directors and Embalmers Licensing Code, 225 ILCS 41/10-35, stating that no license of a funeral director and embalmer intern shall be renewed more than twice, is suspended. Sections requiring that the transportation of deceased human remains to a cemetery, crematory or other place of final disposition shall be under the immediate direct supervision of a licensee, are suspended as they pertain to licensed funeral director interns. Licensees must meet all other requirements for renewal as set forth by the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

For more information visit: <https://www.idfpr.com/profs/FunDirEmb.asp>

Healthcare

Q: Will the administration consider allowing some downstate hospitals to be utilized for elective surgeries while others stay available for COVID-19?

A: The Department of Health and Family Services is working on payment options for hospitals. Elective surgeries were halted to prevent additional communal settings and the possibility of a carrier infecting hospital staff and patients.

Illinois in Development Authority (IHDA)

Q: Does IHDA have a help line for inquiries on their programs?

A: Yes. Please review the following:

- Online: www.ihda.org for current information and contacts for all active IHDA programs
- Email: visit <https://www.ihda.org/about-ihda/contact-us/> for key department contacts
- Phone: for general inquiries, call (312) 836-5200 to be connected with the appropriate department

Q: If I am unable to pay my rent, can I be evicted?

A: By signing of Executive Order 2020-18, Governor JB Pritzker suspended evictions through April 30, 2020.

Q: If I believe I may be unable to pay my rent, who should I contact?

A: There has been no suspension of rent payments for Chicago or the State of Illinois. This means tenants are still obligated to pay their rent per the terms in their lease. IHDA encourages those struggling to make payments to reach out to a housing counselor.

<https://apps.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/hcs.cfm?&webListAction=search&searchstate=IL>

This website can help you understand your options if you are in risk of falling behind on your rent.

Q: Does IHDA administer any rental assistance?

A: No, IHDA does not offer direct rental assistance. The Illinois Department of Human Services does offer a Homeless Prevention Program which includes rental assistance. For more information visit: <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=110583>. The Rental Housing Support Program provides rental assistance to extremely low-income households living in participating properties. Contact one of the administering agencies directly to apply. <https://www.ihda.org/rental-housing/>

The City of Chicago administers its own version of the Rental Housing Support Program. If you currently live in or are interested in living in Chicago and are in need of rental assistance, please contact the Chicago Low-income Housing Trust Fund at: (312) 744-0676

Q: Does the CARES Act mean I don't have to make my mortgage payments?

A: If you can pay your mortgage, pay your mortgage on time. If you are struggling to make your mortgage payments, or believe you may fall behind soon, you should **contact your loan servicer now.**

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allows borrower with a Federally-backed mortgage loan experiencing a financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID-19 emergency may request forbearance on the Federally-backed mortgage loan, regardless of delinquency status. The forbearance shall be granted for up to 180 days and shall be extended for an additional period of up to 180 days at the request of the borrower.

Q: When is the 2020 Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) application due?

A:The submission date of the final applications has been extended to April, 13, 2020 by 5:00pm.

- The new target Board date for 2020 LIHTC applications is July 17, 2020
- Applications for 4% LIHTCs are being accepted on a rolling basis during the second and third quarters of 2020

To view application documents visit: <https://www.ihda.org/developers/dev-resource-center/>

Q: Are services through IHDA still available for Realtors and Partners?

A: Yes

- Expect no service disruptions
- All our programs are fully funded and available
- All reviews are still being conducted in a timely manner
- Please contact us with any questions: <https://www.ihdamortgage.org/contact>

Insurance

Q: What are insurance companies doing regarding cancellations and renewals?

A: Insurers should seek to postpone or withdraw any previous notice of cancellation or nonrenewal in which to cancellation or nonrenewal occurs on or after March 9, 2020 on any in-force policy. Insurers should consider postponing the issuance of any new cancellation or nonrenewal notices through April 30, 2020 or a later time if considered reasonable given an individual consumer's circumstances. Insurers are asked to continue coverage, even in cases of unpaid premium, through at least April 30, 2020. Please review more information from the Department of Insurance: <https://insurance.illinois.gov/cb/2020/CB2020-09.pdf>

Medical Professional Licensure

Q: Will there be an alternative for applicants for a Clinical Professional Counselor license to complete the requirements to obtain their license?

A: IDFPR granted a Variance for Clinical Professional Counselor License Applicants (<https://www.idfpr.com/Forms/COVID19/6-Variance%20for%20Clinical%20Professional%20Counselor%20License%20Applicants.pdf>) to complete their live face-to-face supervision using real-time video or audio technology, as appropriate, rather than on site. When an applicant is providing services to a client, the supervisor should be available and prepared to offer assistance as needed. This variance expires July 31, 2020.

Tax

Q: Some taxpayers may have already scheduled an income tax payment to be made on or before April 15th. How do they cancel or reschedule an income tax payment to be made on or before April 15, 2020?

A: If you scheduled an electronic payment for 2019 income taxes to be paid on or before April 15, 2020, your payment will not automatically be rescheduled to July 15, 2020. If you do nothing, the payment will be made on the date you chose. The Department of Revenue released a set of instructions for a taxpayer to cancel or postpone any previously scheduled payments. To view the instructions visit: <https://www2.illinois.gov/rev/research/news/Pages/Directions-to-Cancel-or-Reschedule-2019-Income-Tax-Return-Electronic-Payment.aspx>

Township

Q: Is there clear guidance on the township code requiring each township's annual township meeting for calendar year 2020?

A: Under Executive Order-22, the provisions of the Township Code, 60 ILCS 1/30-5(a) and 30-5(b), requiring that each township's annual township meeting for calendar year 2020 be held on either April 14, 2020 or April 21, 2020 are suspended through the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations.

Workplace Rights

Q: Where can I report employers that I believe have unsafe conditions due to COVID-19?

A: If you believe your working conditions are unsafe or unhealthy, you may file a complaint with the entity appropriate to your employer type:

- For private sector employers
 - FEDERAL OSHA: <https://www.osha.gov/pls/osha7/eComplaintForm.html>
 - Attorney General's Office: (844) 740-5076 or submit a complaint at: https://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/rights/labor_employ.html
- For state and local government employers
 - Illinois OSHA: <https://www2.illinois.gov/idol/Laws-Rules/safety/Pages/Hazards.aspx>

Q: What are my employee rights if my employer has not closed due to COVID-19?

A: Illinois is an “employment at-will” state, meaning that an employer or employee may terminate the relationship at any time, without any reason or cause. The employer, however, cannot discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, marital status, physical or mental handicap, military service or unfavorable military discharge. For more information visit: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dhr/Pages/default.aspx>

In this particular situation, staying home over concern about COVID-19, an employee may be able to use sick leave or vacation time to be away from work. However, the employee would need to consult with the employer for approval of such leave time.

Other

Q: There have been reports that state park employees are back at work. Are state parks being reopened? Will the Governor consider opening state parks?

A: At this time, 6 state, including Illinois, have decided to fully close their parks and recreational areas. Popular federal sites, including portions of the Shawnee National Forest, also are now closed to visitors to help prevent further spread of COVID-19, the need for upkeep has not. Staff from IDNR's Office of Land Management continue to work at sites to complete necessary projects and maintenance while adhering to public health directives, including staying at least six feet away from fellow staff members and staying home when sick. Other precautions include:

- Not allowing more than one person in a state vehicle at a time
- Wiping down all equipment before and after use
- Wearing gloves as much as possible
- Asking employees to bring lunch from home and not congregate during lunch periods or breaks
- Increased cleaning of bathrooms, buildings and frequently used office items
- Refraining from working in close quarters in enclosed spaces