



TO: RHY Residential Program Providers
FROM: DYCD RHY Services
DATE: March 19, 2020
RE: COVID 19: NYS State of Emergency Guidance

The City of New York Department of Health (NYC DOH) has issued [Interim Covid-19 Guidance for Homeless Shelters](#). Providers must review this guidance, and make assessments regarding how to implement these guidelines based on the specific needs of your facility and population served.

Providers should follow NYC DOH guidelines for determining whether to isolate youth who present with symptoms of illness found in [Appendix 2 of the NYC DOH guidance](#).

The City of New York [has advised](#) that persons should not present to emergency rooms unless symptoms are severe. Providers should follow NYC guidance about referring residents to health care services.

In order to educate youth about Covid-19, providers should follow the guidance about postings issued by the City, as well as distribute hand-outs directly to youth. Providers should be prepared to explain to youth that, while the risks of the illness in this demographic are low, underlying illnesses may make them particularly vulnerable and/or they could be carriers who risk infecting other residents and staff in the program.

DYCD has drafted a policy for Providers to post at their sites, as well as hand to youth individually, which is attached hereto. In the event that a youth presenting with symptoms of illness refuses to isolate, the provider may consider discharge. However, any decision to discharge a youth risks further spread of the virus when the youth leaves the program and providers should make every effort to keep residents in the program under isolation where possible.

ATTACH: Notice to Residents of Updated Protocols During State of Emergency

Runaway and Homeless Youth Services Residential Programs

Notice of Updated Procedures During State of Emergency

The State of New York is currently in a State of Emergency due to the novel coronavirus, Covid-19. All DYCD runaway and homeless youth (RHY) programs are following guidelines issued by federal, state and local governments to keep residents safe during this time.

We will follow New York City Department of Health (DOH) guidance on assessing whether a resident is at risk of contracting or spreading Covid-19.

We want all of the residents and staff to be safe during the coronavirus pandemic. In order to continue providing services safely for both residents and staff, new procedures have been implemented. These procedures are likely to change. We urge flexibility and cooperation.

For all residents:

- If you start to feel ill, please notify a staff member immediately. We will ask you questions based on current DOH guidelines about your symptoms, for example if you have fever, cough, shortness of breath or a sore throat. You must answer these questions fully and honestly.
- If we determine that you should be isolated, we will explain that process to you. You must comply with our decision to isolate you to the best of our ability, which could include asking you to stay in your room and separate yourself from others in the facility. If you do not comply with our decision to isolate, you may be subject to discharge from the program.
- If you are in need of medical care beyond what can be provided to you here at the program, we will work with you to ensure you are referred to appropriate medical care.

These guidelines are subject to change as new information becomes available.