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Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2020 4:57:12 PM
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Subject: Important Information Regarding District Operations Beginning Friday, March 13th

Good Afternoon ESD,

As of Friday March 13, 2020 we are temporarily waiving in person contact requirements for our benefit programs until further notice. For Reach Up case management, this includes home and community visits as well as in office visits. Reach Up case managers should try to meet with their clients via telephone as much as possible. For eligibility, individuals will still be able to drop off documents if they are uncomfortable sending them via mail or uploader. Applicants will still be able to apply in person if they request it after being assisted via phone or appear in a district office as long as the person is able to answer no to the following questions (which are also on the attached sign in that we are requesting you post on the doors to your district office):

In the past 14 days have you:

- Been in contact with a novel coronavirus (COVID-19) infected person?
- Traveled to Vermont from one of the affected countries or regions (listed at healthvermont.gov/covid19)? Currently those countries are: China, Iran, South Korea, Italy and Japan.
- Have you been to a healthcare facility (hospital, walk-in clinic, emergency room) where people infected with novel coronavirus COVID-19 are treated?

General Assistance- We will determine eligibility via phone. An individual calls the BSC at 800-479-6151 and speaks to a call center agent, or leaves a voicemail message, leaving a call back number. The BSC emails the district management team for the clients home district. An assigned BPS will contact the person back and do the eligibility over the phone with them. The BPS will fill out the application for them and read them all of their rights and responsibilities and if denied let them know how to ask for an expedited hearing. A CATN documenting the conversation and the R & R and fair hearing info is crucial.

For emergency housing call backs the BPS will call them on the ININ recorded line. And then add their license number to the CATN.

We will accept self-declaration for pay stubs to determine self-pay nights. The BPS will ask the client to read them the information from their paystubs, or we will check SSI data match, or the DET hits or UC data match. If the person's self-declaration is a close approximation to the information we have already, or similar to prior months, we will accept the self-declaration. Only if it is questionable will we ask them to drop off pay stubs to verify. We will allow drop off documents to come to the front desk in the lobby.

Ongoing PNI and Rent, Karolyn will provide us a with a list of cases per district that received ongoing PNI for the last 3 months. Each district will piece together their ongoing cases from trackers and this list and contact people ahead of their renewal date so they do not come in. The eligibility will be completed via phone.

3SquaresVT- We will follow regular procedures, but a reminder that the customer may self-declare end of employment *if* they are unable to obtain verification due to employer being closed, not responding, illness, or other hardship that restricts their ability to obtain. Be sure to CATN the hardship.

All other technology will be utilized to limit in person contact and encourage uploader, mail, etc...

Reach UP-

All case management contact will be via phone or facetime. We will still allow in person contact if a Vermonter asks after being assisted via phone, if the person is not exhibiting cold or flu symptoms and can answer no to all of the questions on the attached sign.

Rule says clients have to apply for Unemployment before we can grant them. Allow self-declaration that the Vermonter has contacted UC in order to grant and catch up the following month with the DOL data match.

Waive the rule for participants with 60+ months having to engage in work activities before we grant them.

LIHEAP-only concern is crisis fuel and in person application was waived for the CAP's already

Please share any questions or concerns with your operations managers and send up case specific inquiries via aops email per usual.