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DIRECTOR

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**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
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**GAVIN NEWSOM**  
GOVERNOR

March 17, 2020

TO: ALL COUNTY PROGRAM MANAGERS

SUBJECT: CORONAVIRUS 2019 (COVID-19)

REFERENCE: WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE (WIC) SECTION 15763;  
MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (MPP)  
SECTIONS 33-510, 33-545

This Adult Protective Services (APS) Program Managers' Letter (PML) provides counties further information on options for modifying how APS investigations and home visits during the COVID-19 pandemic are conducted. In addition to the direction contained herein, county APS agencies should work closely with their local public health departments and consult their County Counsel offices to determine their community level of risk and need to implement these modifications.

- WIC Section 15763(a) states that each county must establish an emergency response APS program that will provide in-person response, 24 hours a day, seven days a week to reports of abuse of an elder or dependent adult... for the purpose of providing immediate intake or intervention, or both, to new reports involving immediate life threats and to crises in existing cases. (WIC section 15763 and MPP section 33-510)
- Section 15763(b)(2) of the WIC, and MPP section 33-510.251 adds that an immediate or 10-day in-person response is not required when the county, based upon an evaluation of risk, determines and documents that the elder or dependent adult is not in imminent danger and that an immediate or 10-day in-person response is not necessary to protect the health or safety of the elder or dependent adult.

At this time, immediate in-person visits for reports that do not involve immediate life threats such as physical or sexual abuse can be supplanted by phone calls. Reports of imminent danger must, however, be responded to in person. As appropriate, APS social workers should practice social distancing when conducting in-person visits and follow any other applicable public health guidance. Please contact your county's emergency management office for further guidance. Attached to this PML is a list of emergency management phone numbers for each county in the state.

Please also note that APS Social Workers are considered essential employees and should be reporting to work unless they are feeling ill or have tested positive for COVID-19.

All 30-day monitoring visits that are required by statute can also be satisfied with monitoring phone calls with proper documentation, as specified in WIC section 15763 and MPP section 33-545.4, unless the individual is in imminent danger.

Questions or requests for clarification regarding the information in this letter should be directed to the Adult Programs Division, via APS Analyst John Hartmire at (916) 651-5111.

Sincerely,

***ORIGINAL DOCUMENT SIGNED BY***

DEBBI THOMSON  
Deputy Director  
Adult Programs Division

Attachment