



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

March 19, 2020

TO: ALL COUNTY PROGRAM MANAGERS

SUBJECT: SOCIAL DISTANCING OF VULNERABLE CALIFORNIANS DUE TO CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 19 (COVID-19)

This In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program Managers' Letter (PML) provides counties guidance on policy interpretations and flexibilities available to County Welfare Departments (CWDs), as well as expectations for serving communities affected by the outbreak of COVID-19, or novel coronavirus, when administering the IHSS program. On March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom proclaimed a [State of Emergency](#) in California in response to the global COVID-19 outbreak and the increase in the number of positive cases across the state.

This guidance is based on what is currently known about the transmission and severity of COVID-19. The Department will update this guidance as needed and as additional information becomes available.

As stated in the previous [PML](#), dated March 12, 2020, under normal circumstances counties are required to conduct face-to-face needs assessments and reassessments, as required by [WIC Section 12301.1\(b\)](#) and [MPP Section 30-761.13](#). However, given the release of the [Governor's Executive Order](#) of March 17, 2020, counties may suspend any scheduled reassessments through June 30, 2020. Any initial face-to-face assessments to establish eligibility for IHSS must still be performed. If there is a change in these requirements, we will communicate that direction to counties as quickly as possible. When performing initial assessments, county staff should practice social distancing and other safety precautions consistent with guidance issued by State and local public health agencies.

Consistent with the [Governor's Executive Order](#) of March 15, 2020, IHSS providers who are asymptomatic and have not knowingly been exposed to COVID-19 should continue

working and providing needed services to IHSS recipients during this time. IHSS providers should also take precautions recommended by public health agencies to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

FLEXIBILITY IN PROVIDING SERVICES

We advise counties to allow recipients flexibility in assigning weekly service hours to their IHSS providers so that recipients may receive adequate and timely services. Additionally, for situations in which IHSS providers have incurred work violations while performing services that were in critical need, CDSS will take action to remove these violations through June 30, 2020.

Questions or requests for clarification regarding the information in this letter should be directed to the Adult Programs Division, Policy and Quality Assurance Branch, Policy and Operations Bureau at (916) 651-5350.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL DOCUMENT SIGNED BY

DEBBI THOMSON
Deputy Director
Adult Programs Division