

RESOURCES IN TIME OF CRISIS

Supporting Children, Youth and Families in Foster Care

kids-alliance.org

ALLIANCE *for* CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

April 2020

Stay At Home Order EO N-33-20

- ▶ WHEREAS in a short period of time, COVID-19 has rapidly spread throughout California, necessitating updated and more stringent guidance from federal, state, and local public health officials; and
- ▶ WHEREAS for the preservation of public health and safety throughout the entire State of California, I find it necessary for all Californians to heed the State public health directives from the Department of Public Health.



CHILD WELFARE CASE MANAGEMENT AND COURT HEARINGS

Supporting Children, Youth and Families in Foster Care

Child Welfare Resources – Foster Youth Rights

I am a foster youth and my caregiver is denying visits with my family due to COVID-19. What should I do?

- *Despite the current public health situation, you still are entitled to your rights as a foster youth including access to medical care; right to contact family members, your county social worker, attorney, CASA or other advocate; and right to education and social contacts. [Read more about Foster Youth Rights.](#)*



Child Welfare Resources: Court Hearings

On April 6, 2020, the Judiciary adopted Emergency Rules of Court that apply all over California.

- Link to the rules:
<https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8234474&GUID=79611543-6A40-465C-8B8B-D324F5CAE349>
- Rule 6: Dependency Court Rules
- Rule 7: Delinquency Court Rules
- The rules stay in effect until **90 days** after the Governor lifts the state of emergency related to COVID-19, or until they are changed by the Judiciary.

Rule 6: Emergency orders: juvenile dependency proceedings

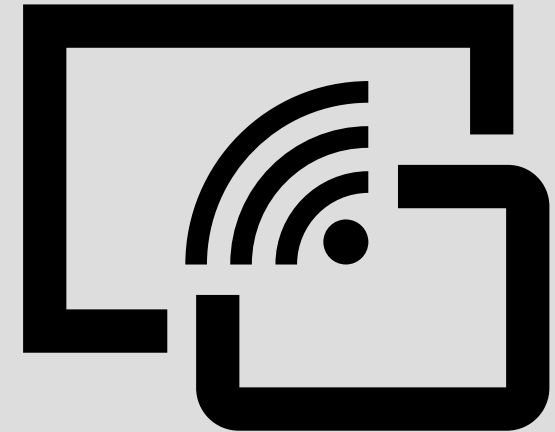


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- **Essential Hearings** – should be prioritized according to existing timelines:
 - 1) Protective Custody Warrants (*WIC 342*)
 - 2) Detention hearings (*WIC 391*)
 - 3) Psychotropic medication applications
 - 4) Emergency medical requests
 - 5) Re-entry petitions for non-minors
 - 6) Request to change a court order (*WIC 388*) that impacts the health and safety of a child

“Remote” Hearings

- All proceedings can be via remote technology. Examples:
 - o Court call
 - o Webex
 - o Zoom
- The child welfare agency is responsible for notice of remote hearings, which must include instructions on how to participate remotely
- Notice can be provided by phone or electronically
- All court reports can be served electronically to attorneys
 - o If parents/children can't receive reports electronically, must be provided a hard copy



Considerations for Remote Hearings



Preserving
confidentiality of
hearings

Court rule requires
judge to admonish all
participants the
proceeding is
confidential – is that
enough?



Do parties have access to technology to
meaningfully participate in the court
hearings?



Limitations for
contested hearings

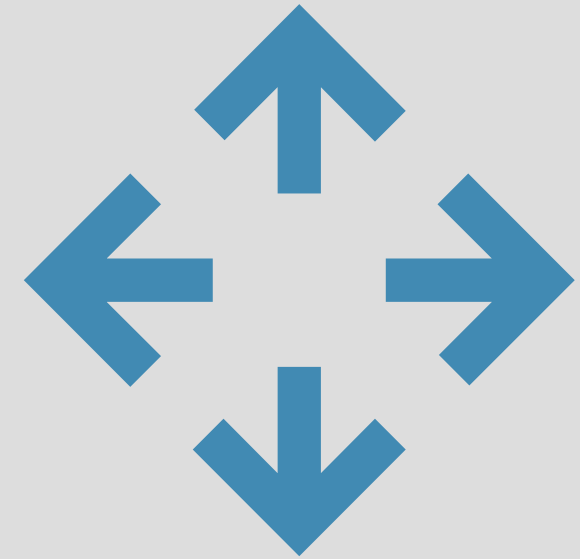
Are witnesses able to
participate?
Difficulties in taking
testimony and cross-
examination

Non-Essential Hearings

- Other hearings can be continued
 - *However, to maintain IV-E eligibility, reasonable effort finding must be made within 12 months from date child entered foster care. Can be made without prejudice and reconsidered at a full hearing*
- IMPORTANT! Nothing in the rule prohibits other hearings from occurring – varies by jurisdiction
- Also court can still make statutorily required findings and orders by minute order
 - *Requires written stipulations from counsel*

Jurisdictional Differences

- Differences in practice from county to county
 - Essential Hearings v. Non-essential hearings
 - Example: Placer doing all hearings; Los Angeles County only doing essential hearings until June 22
 - Remote Hearings v. In-Person Hearings
 - Example: Sacramento and San Diego are 100% remote while other counties are conducting select hearings in person.
- How do I know if a hearing is taking place and whether it will be remote or in person?
 - Find your court at <https://www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm> for information on your court operations.
- Contact the social worker or the child's/parent's counsel for more information.



Advocating During the COVID-19 Crisis

- Even if court only conducting essential hearings, can make findings by stipulation of all counsel
- Consider:
 - Reunifying families whenever possible
 - Ensuring appropriate family contact
 - Least restrictive placement, especially given safety concerns of COVID-19 in congregate care settings
 - Placement with relatives
 - Adjudication of cases where child nearing 18th birthday to preserve eligibility for extended foster care
 - Immigration/predicate orders if child nearing 18th birthday
 - Access to educational resources, mental health services, etc.

Rule 6: Family Visitation



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During the state of emergency, all previously authorized visitation must continue

- Child welfare agency is to determine the “manner of visitation” to ensure the needs of the family are met
- To modify the manner of visitation, must consider:
 - *Public health directives,*
 - *Best interest of the child and*
 - *Whether in-person can continue to be held safely*
- If siblings/parents visits are modified, and the case is in family reunification or pending a .26 hearing, child welfare agency must notice attorneys for child and parents within 5 court days
- Attorneys can ask for court review– child or parent has burden to show change is not in best interest of child or based on public health care directives
- Can only suspend visits if detriment finding is made on particular case – CANNOT be based solely on crisis or public health care directives

Child Welfare Resources: [State Guidance](#) on Family Visitation

- Recommended that counties assess each situation to determine whether to modify face-to-face visits
 - *For children under 3, counties should work to maintain face-to-face visits*
 - *When in-person visits do not occur, recommend that the foster parent provide video conferencing and increased phone calls with family members/other social contacts*
 - *Family connections that are essential to wellbeing of the child should be maintained consistent with screening protocols and social distancing recommendations, including outside visits*
- Caseworker should also consider extended visit if court order permits and youth has had several overnight visits/is due to return home soon

Child Welfare Resources: [Federal Guidance](#) on Family Visitation

- Family time is important for child and parent well-being, as well as for efforts toward reunification
 - *Discourage or refrain from issuing blanket court orders reducing or suspending family time*
 - *Encourage resource parents to supervise family time to limit additional people having to be involved*
 - *Consider the use of family members to supervise contact and engage in visitation outdoors, where feasible*
 - *Inquire whether parents and resource parents have access to technology to ensure virtual connections where in-person family time is not possible*
- Consider whether children may be reunified with their parents in an expedited manner if the child's safety would not be jeopardized.

Child Welfare Resources: Monthly Social Worker Home Visits

Will a child in foster care still receive a monthly visit by a social worker? How are home visits changing in response to COVID-19?

- Section 422(b)(17) of the Social Security Act requires caseworkers to visit children in foster care on a monthly basis and, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, these visits were required to be held face-to-face. In response to the pandemic, the Administration of Children and Families has revised the policy on face-to-face visits to allow for videoconferencing. While it is imperative that caseworkers continue to ensure the well-being of children in care, ACF clarified that the imperative must be balanced against the health of caseworkers, children in care, and all of the people with whom they come into contact. Thus, while there has been no change in the policy that every child must receive a monthly visit, those visits can now occur through online conference platforms like Skype, FaceTime or Zoom. [Source: [Child Welfare Policy Manual \(CWPM\), §7.3, question #8](#)]

Child Welfare Resources: Monthly Visits



How should a caseworker determine if a monthly visitation with children/youth needs to occur in person or via videoconferencing?

In order to minimize the transmission of COVID-19, some face-to-face caseworker visits may not be possible at this time. Whether a monthly visit should occur in person is a child-specific decision that must be made based on the training and experience of the social worker and considering all available information. Counties should begin by assessing the individual needs of families and children. This assessment of need should start with a call to every family to ensure they have what they need to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Child Welfare Resources: NMD Monthly Visits

How can non-minor dependents (NMDs) complete their monthly visitation visit with their caseworkers if the NMD does not have a phone or computer?

If the youth does not have a telephone or computer, it is imperative that case workers make arrangements to ensure the youth's needs are met and there is a way to contact the youth. Regardless of what method is utilized for monthly visits, case workers shall ensure that NMDs have proper resources and a plan developed for following local public health guidance, including, but not limited to: housing, food, water, hygiene, and other needed items. This applies to both NMDs in California and to those living out of state.

Child Welfare Resources: Emergency Placement

- During the effective period of [EO N-53-20](#), if there is currently no relative, NREFM, TAH pending approval, or “compelling reason” placement pursuant to WIC section 16519.5 (e) available, and if a community family that has not yet been approved (“unapproved family”) has been identified as a potential placement for a specific child and is willing and able to provide immediate care for a child, the county may utilize the emergency placement process set forth in WIC sections 361.4 or 727.05.
 - *includes a family that is working with a Foster Family Agency (FFA) toward approval as a resource family.*
- ALL emergency placements must still be assessed under WIC 361.4 or 727.05. It is critical for this in-home inspection to occur in order to determine whether there are other adults residing or regularly present in the home. Such inspections may not be conducted via telephone or videoconferencing.

Child Welfare Resources: Emergency Placement

If a child is placed in an emergency placement during the statewide “Stay at Home” order, what are the available options if live scan services are not available?

- In the event of an emergency placement made pursuant to WIC Code Sections 309 or 361.45, families are generally required to submit their fingerprints for background checks within 10 days of receiving the emergency placement of a child or within five business days of receiving the emergency placement, whichever is sooner.
- If local live scan services are not available, the county may continue to rely on the results of the California Law Enforcement Telecommunication System (CLETs) for the maintenance of the placement. In instances when individuals who are required to live scan have been unable to live scan, those individuals should live scan within 15 days of when services are restored and the state “stay at home” order is lifted.

SILP Approval: Foster Youth Displaced from College

What housing options are available for foster youth who have recently been displaced from a university's dormitory living arrangement due to public health concerns regarding COVID-19.

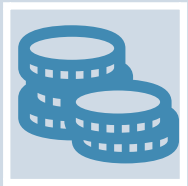
- If a youth is displaced from their dorms, counties should continue the Supervised Independent Living Program (SILP) payment until such time that the NMD informs the county of the new or temporary residence. Counties may waive SILP inspection. The SOC 157B required signatures may be collected via mail.
- Counties should reach out to these youth to ensure they have the resources needed for transportation funds if they must temporarily move from campus, for alternate housing if dorms close, and to remain supported while they are out of school and to assist with ensuring that they are able to return to their campuses if they need to leave.



Extension of EFC beyond age 21 (until June 30, 2020)



Suspension participation requirements through June 30, 2020



Flexibility to approve SILPs for all NMDs and allow continuation of funding for youth when they are between placements (not just those that are displaced from college)

Supports for TAY

Re-Entry into Extended Foster Care

Nonminors ages 18 to 21 requesting entry or re-entry into EFC must continue to be served

A nonminor's inability to immediately satisfy the participation criteria for the program due to the COVID-19 pandemic is not grounds to deny entry or re-entry into EFC, because only the nonminor's intent to satisfy at least one of the participation criteria is required

The assessment regarding the youth's eligibility may be initially conducted through video conferencing, telephone, or other technology

The Mutual Agreement for Extended Foster Care (SOC 162) and the Voluntary ReEntry Agreement for Extended Foster Care (SOC 163) must still be completed with the nonminor; however, these may temporarily be completed without a face-to-face meeting.

The Department reminds county placing agencies and Title IV-E tribes that placement and care responsibility starts when the agreement with the NMD is signed (or agreed upon) and counties may not postpone housing and services in order to file or hear an entry or re-entry petition in the juvenile court.

Child Welfare Resources: CFT Meetings

Will Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings occur during the “stay at home” order?

- Yes. CFT meetings are an essential strategy for ensuring that families and providers can continue caring for children and to provide a way for the county to learn of the emotional and practical needs of the children and families during this time. When it is not possible or advisable to conduct meetings in person, meetings may be conducted using alternative options, including using videoconference or teleconference technology (with several free options, such as Skype, Zoom, or freeconferencecall.com available).
- CDSS recommends counties prioritize holding CFT meetings focused on the immediate and contingency planning needs of children in home-based placements and in congregate care placements at risk of placement disruption or who may be particularly significantly impacted by disruptions related to COVID-19.

Child Welfare Resources: Resource Family Approval Flexibility

- **Family Evaluation:** During the effective period of EO N-53-20, interviews for the family evaluation, including the applicants and children in the home, may be completed by videoconferencing (e.g., Skype, Zoom, etc.), rather than face-to-face
 - *If RFA program staff believe it is necessary to meet with the applicant and/or individual in person and there is not a way to do so that is consistent with state and local public health guidelines, in-person contact should be delayed and this delay should be documented in the RFA applicant's file as the reason for the delay of RFA approval.*
- **Capacity Restrictions:** Capacity requirements for resource families or applicants may be waived by a county if there is an immediate need for placement of additional children due to isolation or quarantine requirements of a child as a result of COVID-19
- **Home and bedroom sharing:** A county may waive home and grounds requirements related to bedroom sharing and use of common areas for sleeping as necessary for prevention, containment, and mitigation measures, as long as the health and safety of a child is not compromised

Child Welfare Resources: Resource Family Approval Training

Will resource parent trainings still be available during this time?

- *Counties have postponed all in-person trainings for resource parents and caregivers. For more information, please call your social worker*
- *In Los Angeles, you can contact the **Resource Family Approval (RFA) warm line** at (877) 323-7165 or visit the [DCFS COVID-19 Updates](#) page.*
- *For other counties, contact your social worker for more information.*



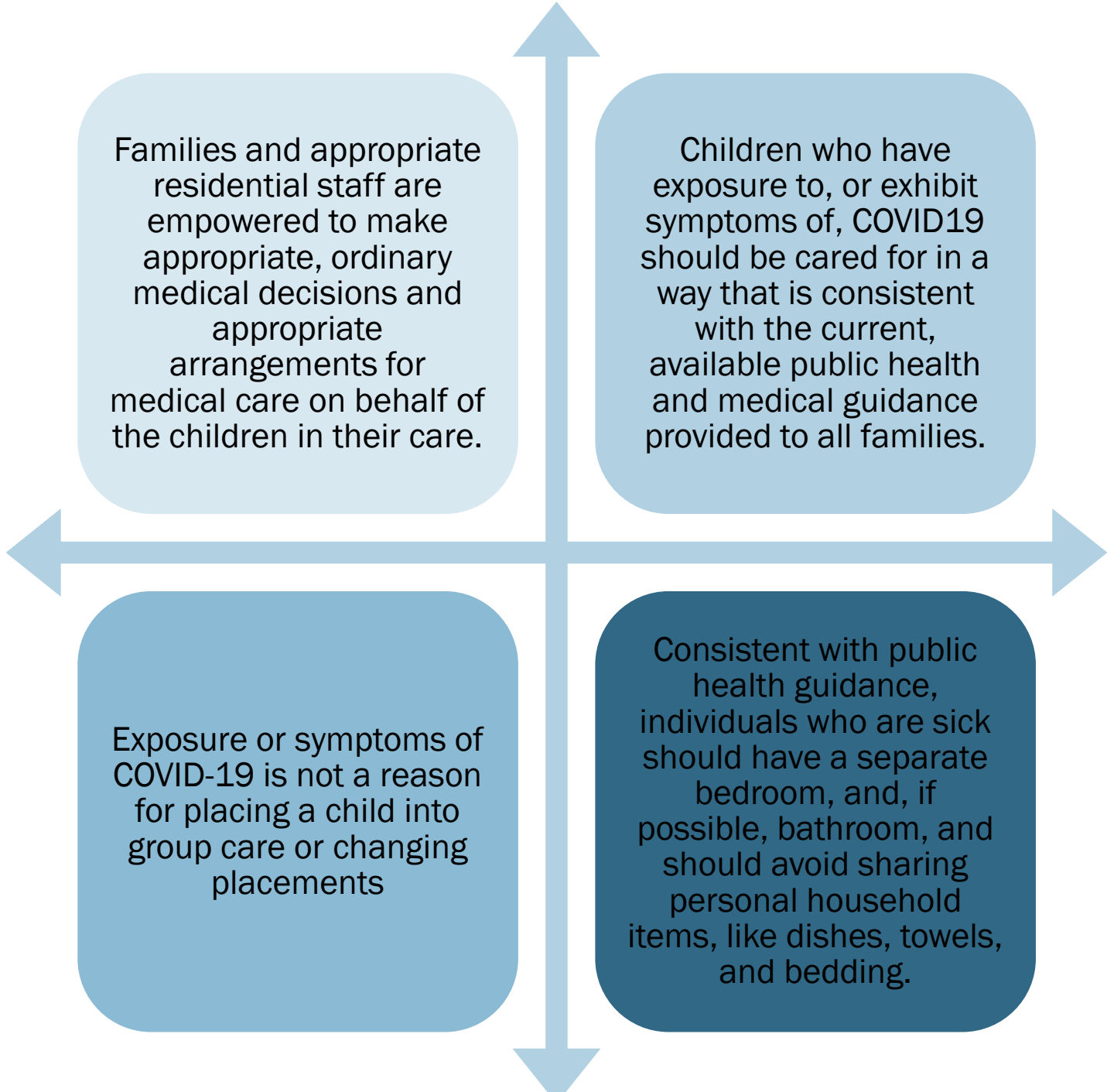
Child Welfare Resources: Resource Family Approval Annual Update

- **When there is a child placed in a home requiring an update:** the Department is allowing the update to be completed up to 180 days after the due date. This extension also allows a resource family additional time to complete their post-approval training requirements.
- **If there is no child currently in placement with the resource family,** and the resource family is due for their update, the county may temporarily suspend the update requirement until the statewide COVID-19 emergency has ended.
 - *If a child is subsequently placed with a resource family, the county will follow the direction in the previous paragraph and extend the update requirement deadline.*



Child Welfare Resources: Youth in Congregate Care

- Children’s residential care providers should establish health screening protocols for new admissions, for children returning from being off the premises of the facility, and for staff who enter and exit the facility each day.
- Facilities may request a county to provide a health screen for COVID-19 from a public health nurse, the child’s primary care physician, or another medical professional, as relevant and necessary for the children in their care.
- Depending upon the medical recommendations of the health professional, the provider-led response should seek to keep the child safe in the facility, or the county-led response should identify the best placement option for the child if the child cannot be safely cared for in the facility. Options include placing the child into a smaller family home environment, including reunification, extended home visits, or emergency placements using rate flexibility.



Child Welfare Resources – What if a Youth in Foster Care Develops COVID-19?

Child Welfare Resources – What If a Resource Parent Develops COVID-19?

- If a caregiver has been exposed to, presents symptoms of, or tests positive for, COVID19, the caseworker should ensure that the caregiver has support in caring for the child and in effectively self-isolating, including through the resources linked here.
- Caregiver exposure or illness is not in and of itself reason for moving a child.
- When a health professional has recommended that a child or caregiver should be isolated or quarantined due to COVID-19 exposure or symptoms, the county or Foster Family Agency, as applicable, should work with the caregiver to develop an emergency plan to meet practical needs such as food delivery, medication delivery, telehealth consultations, and mental health services.

Governor Newsom's [Announcement](#) of Additional Investments to Support At-Risk Children

- **Additional Social Worker Outreach – \$6,896,552.** Support for social worker overtime and additional outreach by county social workers to foster family caregivers at higher risk of COVID-19 (e.g. caregivers who are over 60 years old). Social workers will engage these caregivers to identify specific needs or concerns.
- **Family Resource Centers – \$3,000,000.** Funding will provide direct support and services to foster families, including material items, assistance with isolation needs, parenting resources, and staff time to help link families to other state and federal supports (e.g. food, housing, etc.).
- **Expansion of Helplines – \$250,000.** Funds will assist 2-1-1 and Parents Anonymous to offer immediate assistance to families in crisis who are seeking assistance. Parents Anonymous will provide expanded hours of services, link parents to online support groups and will make referrals to county and local services and Family Resource Centers as needed.

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS AND BENEFITS

Supporting Children, Youth and Families in Foster Care

Federal CARES Act Stimulus Payments

Who will receive the stimulus payments?

- Individuals who filed taxes in 2018, 2019, or are receiving Social Security benefits, and file using a Social Security Number are potentially eligible to receive a stimulus payment (refundable credit). Some key rules are as follows:
 - *Those with adjusted gross income up to \$75,000 (individual/head of household) or \$150,000 (married filing jointly) and who are not claimed as a dependent on someone else's taxes, are eligible for \$1,200 (\$2,400 for married).*
 - *Above those amounts, the credit goes down \$5 for every \$100 above the \$75,000/\$150,000 limits. The credit is entirely phased-out at \$99,000 for single filers, \$136,500 for head of household filers with one child, and \$198,000 for joint filers with no children.*
 - *Additionally, those eligible for an adult payment also will receive an additional \$500 per dependent child who is 16 years old or younger.*

Note: This is a “refundable credit,” so individuals who have no income, who do not have to file taxes because they do not earn enough, and whose income is from non-taxable, means-tested benefit programs like Supplemental Security Income (SSI) can all receive payments.

CARES Stimulus Payments, Cont.

When will I get a payment?

Distribution has already begun and will continue for the next few weeks.

You will receive a payment automatically with no action required if you:

- *Filed taxes for 2018 or 2019*
- *Receive Social Security or Social Security Disability*
- *Receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – newly announced on April 15*

What if I don't file taxes?

If you receive veterans disability compensation, a pension, or survivor benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, or your income level does not require you to file a tax return, then you need to submit information to the IRS to receive an Economic Impact Payment.

You can send this information online at:

<https://www.freefillableforms.com/#/fd/EconomicImpactPayment>

Stimulus Payments: FAQs

Can a Resource Parent Receive a Stimulus Payment for a Foster Child?

- If the resource parent filed taxes in 2018 or 2019, claimed a foster child as a dependent, and is otherwise income-eligible for a payment, they will automatically receive an additional payment for that child.

What if I have not filed 2019 taxes?

- If a foster parents did not yet file 2019 taxes, go to <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/economic-impact-payment-information-center> for information on how to use the “Get My Payment” tool and/or to file taxes.
- For non-filers, the IRS has a new web tool to assist those who don’t normally file taxes. Information and a link to the tool are here: <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/non-filers-enter-payment-info-here>

Can nonminor dependents receive a stimulus check?

- Yes, as long as no one else claims them as a dependent and they meet all other eligibility requirements.
- Adult supporters and advocates should support youth in filing taxes, using the non-filer tool if applicable, and establishing checking accounts (since receiving a paper check could take many months)

Other Benefits: Suspended Discontinuances

On March 17, 2020, Governor Newsom signed Executive Order N-29-20 suspending discontinuances of eligibility for public benefit programs that many children and families rely on to meet their basic needs. This suspension impacts the following:

Medi-Cal	CalFresh
CalWORKs	Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI)
In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)	

Pursuant to the Executive Order, eligibility for assistance under these programs will continue until 6/17/20 for all individuals and families. Depending on the program, you may still receive paperwork for annual redeterminations; you are encouraged to fill this paperwork in, but your case will not be discontinued as a result of the paperwork being submitted.

The Executive Order is intended to ensure that there is no disruption in health care services, food supports, cash assistance, or in-home assistance for these families.

Suspension of Redeterminations for Permanency Supports

- **Kin-GAP** redeterminations will be delayed and all cases will continue to receive payment without the caregiver being required to send certification back within the typical timeline.
- **AAP:** Counties are being reminded that when AAP reassessments “the AAP 3” are sent to an adoptive parent, it’s at the parents discretion to return the assessment within 90 days, and if no form is returned the same rate will be continued.

Funding for Emergency Placements

Emergency caregivers, and community families assessed under the temporary flexibility for emergency placements, are eligible for emergency caregiver funding pursuant to WIC section 11461.36.

During the effective period of [EO N-53-20](#), emergency caregiver funding shall not be discontinued if the approval exceeds 365 days when the determination to approve or deny the RFA application has been delayed due to the COVID-19 emergency.

Foster Care Benefits: Rate Flexibility

- Temporary use of COVID-19 is allowed as a Static Criteria for a rate equivalent to the Intensive Services Foster Care rate (\$2609 per child per month) to provide care for children in the following situations:
 - The child or another member of the household requires isolation or quarantine due to COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 and, as a result, there are increased care and supervision needs.
 - The child requires a new placement due to sudden displacement brought on by the COVID-19 crisis and the child is at risk of shelter placement.
- STRTP-Eligible Children Placed in a Family Home Setting with Exceptional Supports
 - Counties are authorized to negotiate a rate, not to exceed the STRTP rate, with an FFA that is able to provide individualized exceptional care, supervision, and services to a child who is determined to need an STRTP level of care.

\$200 Stipends to Support Families in Emergency Response or Family Maintenance

- **Supporting Families Struggling to Stay Together** –. Stipends of \$200 per month to families in the Emergency Response and Family Maintenance programs and who need additional economic support to be able to stay together.



EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES

Supporting Children, Youth and Families in Foster Care



22 million Americans filed jobless claims in the past four weeks – about 13.4 percent of the US labor force.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/16/economy/unemployment-benefits-coronavirus/index.html>

Types of Financial Assistance to Support Employees During Layoffs or Periods of Reduced Hours

Sick Leave and Paid Family Leave (Family First Coronavirus Response Act):
If you're unable to work because you are **caring for** an ill or quarantined family member with COVID-19 (certified by a medical professional) – OR – to care for a child whose school or child care is closed

State Disability Insurance: If you're unable to work due to medical quarantine or illness related to COVID-19 (certified by a medical professional)

Worker's Compensation: If you are unable to do your usual job because you were exposed to and contracted COVID-19 during the regular course of your work, you may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits

State Unemployment Insurance: If you have lost your job or have had your hours reduced for reasons related to COVID-19

Additional Benefits During the Pandemic

Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (PUC):

- Available April 12, 2020 through July 31, 2020
- Provides **an extra \$600/week** for everyone who is going to receive state Unemployment Insurance

Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC):

- Available to individuals actively searching for employment and have exhausted benefits under regular unemployment
- Up to 13 weeks of additional benefits.
- States must offer flexibility in meeting PEUC eligibility requirements related to those who are “actively seeking work” if an applicant is impacted by COVID-19

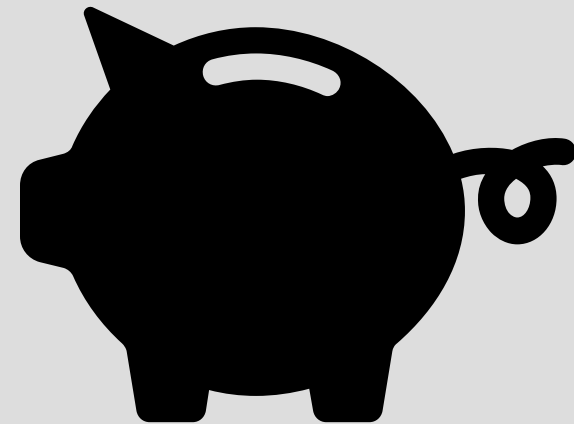
Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Program

- Available to individuals ordinarily left out of state unemployment benefits
- Runs retroactively from February 2, 2020 through through December 31, 2020 (max. 39 weeks)
- An additional \$600 to each PUA weekly benefit amount you may be eligible to receive, as part of the separate CARES Act Pandemic Additional Compensation program. Only the weeks of a claim between March 29 and July 31 are eligible for the extra \$600 payments.
- To apply, applicants must show they are partially or fully unemployed OR are unable to work because of COVID-19 related conditions such as:
 - *a COVID-19 diagnosis or symptoms;*
 - *a household member has been diagnosed with COVID-19;*
 - *the applicant is providing care for a child who cannot attend school or other household members who cannot go to work due to COVID-19 closures;*
 - *recently left work because of COVID-19*
 - *place of employment is closed because of COVID-19; OR*
 - *the applicant qualifies under other criteria as defined by the Secretary of Labor.*

Extension of Tax Deadlines

- On March 20, Secretary of the Treasury Mnuchin [announced](#) an extension of the filing deadline for all taxpayers to July 15, 2020.
- Taxpayers do not need to file an extension request and are encouraged to file earlier than July 15, 2020 if owed a refund.

- The California Franchise Tax Board [announced](#) a similar filing extension for California tax filings to July 15, 2020.



Tax Credits



Federal EITC

<https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/individuals/earned-income-tax-credit>

California EITC and Young Child Tax Credit

<https://www.ftb.ca.gov/file/personal/credits/california-earned-income-tax-credit.html>

Child Care for At-Risk Populations

Executive Order N-33-20

Executive Order N-45-20

Executive Order N-47-20

ACWDL dated March 30, 2020

- Early learning and child care programs are a critical support and source of continuity for at-risk children and their caregivers and their participation should not be interrupted if possible.
- Under the current Executive Orders children at-risk can continue to receive child care at the request of the caregiver and/or parent even if they are not designated as essential workers.
- Children at-risk have priority to receive new limited term child care subsidies under the Emergency Child Care Program

At-Risk (for Child Care) Includes:

- Reported to be abused or at-risk of abuse;
- Receiving a child care voucher through the Bridge Program;
- Families experiencing homelessness
- Children of domestic violence survivors.
- Children with exceptional needs

To find child care, contact the local Resource and Referral Agency or go online to <https://rrnetwork.org/family-services/find-child-care>



HEALTHCARE RESOURCES

Supporting Children, Youth and Families in Foster Care

Accessing Healthcare

All health insurance plans are required to provide no-cost care to members seeking coronavirus testing, screening, or treatment.

What if I need health insurance?

- Covered California has announced a new Special Enrollment Period (SEP) effective immediately. Anyone uninsured and eligible to enroll in health care coverage through Covered California can sign up through the end of June. coveredca.com
- For more information on how to keep your Medi-Cal during a pandemic: healthconsumer.org/covid19

Accessing Mental Health Services



- LA County Department of Mental Health clinics and drop-in centers will remain open to clients. Mobile units will continue to provide field services. If clients prefer to receive mental health services by telephone and/or telehealth, they may do so through [HIPAABridge](#).
 - HIPAABridge supports a free [mobile application](#) that families and youth can download on their telephone.
- NAMI is maintaining a mental health helpline to support those who are struggling with anxiety, depression, and stress due to COVID-19 as well as sharing useful tips. **Crisis Text Line is open 24/7; text NAMI to 741741.**
- **California Youth Crisis Line: 1-800-843-5200 (call or text)**
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Disaster Hotline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746**

Mental Health Services: California Peer-Run Warm Line

- The Peer-Run Warm Line is a non-emergency resource for anyone in California seeking emotional support. It provides assistance via phone and webchat on a nondiscriminatory basis to anyone in need.
- Phone Number: (1-855-845-7415)
- Webchat: <https://www.mentalhealthsf.org/peer-run-warmline/>

FOOD ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

Supporting Children, Youth and Families in Foster Care

Accessing Food Assistance



Find a nearby food bank through
<http://www.cafoodbanks.org/>



Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
(LAHSA) list of [Food and Grocery Programs by
Service Planning Area](#)



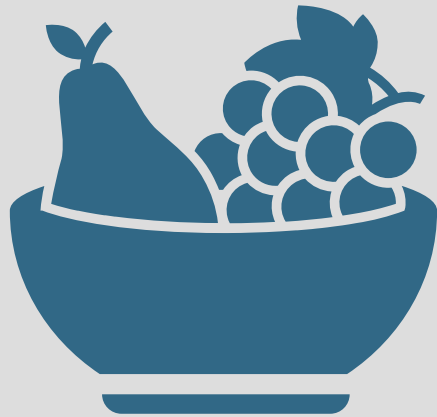
CA “Meals for Kids” mobile app has been updated
to help families find meals during COVID-19-related
school closures

- **Apply:** at [GetCalFresh.org](https://www.getcalfresh.org) (CalFresh only) and www.benefitscal.org (CalFresh, CalWORKs and/or MediCal)
- **Administrative Flexibilities:**
 - **For New Applicants:** California waived the initial interview requirement for households who submit required documents with their application and has more flexibility to accept application over the phone.
 - **For Existing Households :** California waived certain reporting requirements so that CalFresh households can continue to receive benefits.
 - **EBT Online Purchasing:** California will implement EBT online purchasing on April 28, 2020 so that CalFresh benefits can be used to buy groceries online.
- **Additional Benefits:** emergency benefits will be issued to raise CalFresh benefits to the maximum for the household size (for March and April 2020).

CalFresh Food Benefits



Coming Soon: Pandemic EBT



- Children who are normally eligible for free or reduced priced school meals, but may not be able to access school meals due to COVID school closures, will be eligible to receive ‘P-EBT’ benefits.
- P-EBT benefits will temporarily provide additional food benefits to families. They can be used like CalFresh food benefits, but are separate from CalFresh.
- You can pick up “grab and go” school meals or get CalFresh AND get P-EBT benefits.
- More information is coming soon. Children who are currently receiving CalFresh, Medi-Cal or Foster Care benefits will automatically get a P-EBT card in the mail.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC Benefits)

- WIC benefits provide families with young children nutrition benefits.
- Many WIC offices are not providing face-to-face services and instead are providing remote services to families through outreach [by phone, text and email](#)
 - *People who have been economically affected by the COVID-19 crisis and are pregnant, postpartum or have a child under five years old can apply for WIC services by texting APPLY to 91997, calling WIC at 888-942-2229, or visiting phfewic.org/apply*



HOUSING RESOURCES

Supporting Children, Youth and Families in Foster Care



Housing Assistance

California Eviction Moratorium

- California issued a statewide moratorium on residential evictions for renters who cannot pay their rent because of COVID-19 related economic hardships. The moratorium went into effect on March 27 and is valid through May 31, 2020.
- If COVID-19 has impacted your ability to pay all or part of your rent, you should:
 - Explain your financial situation to your landlord and relay how much you are able to pay
 - Save all financial documents
 - Pay as much of your rent as you can
- If your landlord is attempting to evict you for not paying rent and you took all of the above steps, contact a local legal aid provider.

Eviction Moratorium: Obligation to Pay Rent

Does this mean tenants do not have to pay rent?

- No. Tenants are still legally obligated to pay their rent. *Unless there is a local law to the contrary*, landlords can:
 - *issue the usual “three day notice to pay rent or quit;”*
 - *charge late fees; and*
 - *report delinquent rent payment to credit agencies.*
- However, until the Judicial Council’s Emergency Rule 1 expires or is rescinded, landlords will not be able to start a *new* eviction lawsuit just because the tenant is behind on rent.
- Once Emergency Rule 1 expires or rescinded, landlords will have the option of proceeding with eviction lawsuits based on the fact the tenant fell behind. Some landlords may choose to work with tenants, but in the absence of a local law requiring it, landlords will not be obligated to give tenants time to get caught up.

Relief from Financial Institutions

- The CARES Act requires financial institutions that service federally-backed mortgage loans to offer six months (180 days) of mortgage forbearance to any borrower who requests it and affirms they are experiencing financial hardship during the COVID-19 emergency. Financial institutions are required to extend the initial period of forbearance by an additional 180 days upon request from any borrower.
 - *Borrowers are not required to provide extensive documentation or proof of their hardship to qualify for CARES Act forbearance.*
 - *During any forbearance period, your servicer cannot charge any penalties, interest, or fees in connection with your mortgage relief.*
 - *CARES Act mortgage relief is effective beginning March 27, 2020.*
- For those without federally backed mortgages: the State of California is working to soften the financial impact of COVID-19 on residents who are struggling to pay their mortgage and bills. Citigroup, JP Morgan Chase, US Bank, Wells Fargo, and nearly 200 state-chartered banks, credit unions, and servicers have committed to providing relief for consumers and homeowners in California. See the [list of participating financial institutions](#).

Housing Assistance: Mortgage Payments

Utilities Assistance

Utilities including LADWP, PG&E, SMUD, SDG&E, and SoCalEdison are providing resources and relief to eligible residents.

- *Utilities will not shut off or disconnect customers who are delinquent or behind in service or permit payments until the Stay at Home order is lifted.*
- *Utilities are offering payment arrangements to help pay your bill.*
- *Contact your utility provider for more information.*

CDSS: Housing and Homelessness Programs



CalWORKs Homeless Assistance (HA) Program.



Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP)



Home Safe



CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP)



Bringing Families Home (BFH)

CDSS: Housing and Homelessness Programs

Does a three-day pay or quit notice meet the program eligibility requirements for CDSS-funded programs?

- A three-day pay or quit notice meets the eligibility requirements of imminent risk of homelessness for CalWORKs HA, the BFH Program, HDAP, and Home Safe Program.

How can CDSS programs help with housing instability?

- CalWORKs HA can be used to pay up to two months of rental arrearages to prevent eviction. Additionally, the CalWORKs HSP, BFH, HDAP, and Home Safe program funds can be used to provide supports and financial assistance, as needed, to prevent program participants from returning to homelessness.

For program participants impacted by COVID-19, can housing assistance be extended, including rental or interim housing assistance?

- For all program participants, routine assessments of service and financial assistance needs should be completed, and programs should provide necessary resources, consistent with current program guidance, to ensure housing stability is maintained and loss of shelter or returns to homelessness are avoided as much as possible

Project Roomkey - Emergency Housing for Immediate Protection

California has become the first state in the nation to secure FEMA approval of Public assistance (PA) funding costs related to emergency, non-congregate sheltering (NCS) for tens of thousands of people experiencing homelessness in California in order to protect them and the state from COVID-19.

FEMA will reimburse Emergency NCS costs incurred for:

- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 that do not require hospitalization, but need isolation or quarantine (including those exiting from hospitals);
- Individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 (as documented by a state or local public health official, or medical health professional) that do not require hospitalization, but need isolation or quarantine; and
- Individuals who are asymptomatic, but are at “high-risk,” such as people over 65 or who have certain underlying health conditions (respiratory, compromised immunities, chronic disease), and who require Emergency NCS as a social distancing measure.


Project Roomkey: What can the State do to help?

- The State is providing technical assistance to local communities, in coordination with local emergency operations centers, tribes, county social services agencies, cities and homeless Continuums of Care, to help communities establish occupancy agreements with local property owners to secure emergency housing to keep people experiencing homelessness safe from COVID-19.
- This includes offering template legal agreements which reflect FEMA requirements, examples and resource documents related to services necessary for immediate onsite operation, and consulting regarding questions about onsite operations, potential resources, and fiscal matters.

Housing Assistance for TAY

TAY Housing

- Some foster youth who live on-campus may have no home to go to when their college campuses close. If you are or know of a foster youth that is staying at a college dorm room that is going to be closed, please contact [Together We Rise \(info@togetherwerise.org\)](mailto:info@togetherwerise.org) and they will provide or help find housing.
- U-Haul is offering [30 days of free self-storage](#) to help college students who are currently housing insecure.
- If you are a student affected by COVID-19 and in need of emergency relief, contact the [Student Relief Fund](#).



TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Supporting Children, Youth and Families in Foster Care



Technology Assistance



- iFoster is offering technology access to foster youth ages 13-24:
 - *free, unlimited high-speed data hotspots,*
 - *headsets, and laptops*
 - *call 1-855-936-7837 or email phone@ifoster.org*
- Current and former foster youth in need a laptop for remote learning, email [One Simple Wish](mailto:OneSimpleWish@onesimplewish.org) at info@onesimplewish.org



- Many providers are offering free broadband or Wi-Fi Access
- See <https://kids-alliance.org/covid-19/> for more information



[Facetime](#)

[Whatsapp](#)

[Snapchat](#)

[Zoom](#)

[Google Hangouts](#)

[Google Duo](#)

[Skype](#)

[Facebook Messenger](#)

[Free Conference Call](#)

[Google Voice](#)

Verification of Foster Youth Status

- For current dependents:
 - Pursuant to [EO N-53-20](#), CDSS may issue foster care verification to current dependents and wards for the purpose of the Phones for Foster Youth Program
 - Current or former foster youth may request a verification letter from the OFCO by calling the OFCO hotline, toll free at 1-877-846-1602.
 - All requests for a verification letter will be completed by OFCO as soon as feasibly possible, but in no case later than five (5) calendar days after the request is made.
 - Completed verification letters will be provided to the youth, the county placing agency, applicable Title IV-E tribe(s), and iFoster by fax, email, or U.S. mail.
 - CDSS, county placing agencies, and Title IV-E tribes may additionally provide the verification directly to iFoster for purposes of the Program.

RESOURCES IN TIME OF CRISIS

Supporting Children, Youth and Families in Foster Care

kids-alliance.org

ALLIANCE *for* **CHILDREN'S RIGHTS**

April 2020

General Resources

- California Coronavirus Response Website: <https://covid19.ca.gov/>
- California Department of Public Health: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Guidance.aspx?fbclid=IwAR2JzIMU2EntjU12yXw8YwXxbrfAmORTw43xaDVuXVZj7sf03t53jb1bgCk>
- Covered CA: <https://www.coveredca.com/>
- Center's for Disease Control COVID 19 page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Alliance for Children's Rights COVID-19 Resource Page: <https://kids-alliance.org/covid-19/>
- Western Center on Law and Poverty COVID 19 Information: <https://wclp.org/covid-19-coronavirus-information-response-and-considerations/>

Child Welfare Resources

- **CDSS COVID-19 Resources:** <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/#covid19>
- **John Burton Advocates for Youth:** <https://www.jbaforyouth.org/covid-19-resources/>
- **When you can't be there in person:** <https://haralambie.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/When-You-Cant-Be-Therein-Person.pdf>
- **Youth Law Center Making Emergency Plans With Youth in Foster Care:** <https://ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/YLC-Toolkit-for-Emergency-Planning-with-Youth-in-Congregate-Care.pdf>
- **Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative (LAOYC) Fact Sheet for Foster Youth:** https://kids-alliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/OYC_COVID19-info.pdf
- **Center for Parent & Teen Communication:** <https://parentandteen.com/>
- **Counties Participating in Courtesy Supervision:** <https://www.cwda.org/county-tools/counties-participating-courtesy-supervision>
- **Child Welfare COVID:** childwelfarecovid.org

Benefits and Financial Support Resources

- [Income Benefits for Transition Aged Youth:](https://www.jbaforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Student-income-resources-4.10.20.pdf)
<https://www.jbaforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Student-income-resources-4.10.20.pdf>
- [California Employment Development Department COVID-19:](https://www.edd.ca.gov/about_edd/coronavirus-2019.htm)
https://www.edd.ca.gov/about_edd/coronavirus-2019.htm
- [Pandemic Unemployment Assistance:](https://edd.ca.gov/about_edd/coronavirus-2019/pandemic-unemployment-assistance.htm)
https://edd.ca.gov/about_edd/coronavirus-2019/pandemic-unemployment-assistance.htm
- [Benefits.Gov COVID-19 Support:](https://www.benefits.gov/help/faq/Coronavirus-resources)
<https://www.benefits.gov/help/faq/Coronavirus-resources>
- [IRS Coronavirus Tax Relief:](https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus-tax-relief-and-economic-impact-payments) <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus-tax-relief-and-economic-impact-payments>

Substance Abuse Resources

- **AA Meetings in California:** <https://alcoholicsanonymous.com/aa-meetings/california/>
- **NA Meetings in California:** <https://www.narcotics.com/na-meetings/california/>
- **Resources for emotional support and well being:** <https://covid19.ca.gov/resources-for-emotional-support-and-well-being/>

Mental Health Resources

- **Helping Children Cope in Emergencies:** <https://www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/helping-children-cope.html>
- **Resources for Supporting Children’s Emotional Needs During the COVID-19 Epidemic:** <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/resources-for-supportingchildrens-emotional-well-being-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>
- **National Institute of Mental Health Coping With Traumatic Events:** <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/coping-with-traumatic-events/index.shtml>
- **National Institute of Mental Health Tips for Talking With Your Health Care Provider:** <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/tips-for-talking-with-your-health-care-provider/index.shtml>
- **Build a Teen Stress Management Plan:** <https://parentandteen.com/teen-stress-management-plan/>
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness:** <https://www.nami.org/covid-19-guide>

Legal Resources

- National Association for Counsel of Children : <https://www.naccchildlaw.org>
- American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law:
www.americanbar.org
- Family Justice Initiative: www.familyjusticeinitiative.org
- Judicial Council of California: www.courts.ca.gov