

Additional Requirements for Working from Home

Staff and client must use visual and audio (or captioning) for face-to-face interaction. Telehealth may not be provided via voice only. We recommend use of technology such as Zoom for WIC local agencies and clinics considering a telehealth alternative to face-to-face clinic visits. Please see the document titled “Zoom for Telehealth” for more information about Zoom.

When documenting services provided via telehealth due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, ensure specific strategies and plans for follow-up and referral based on current resources (e.g. indicate if resources are closed or client is quarantined) are documented in the chart.

Agencies need to have policy and procedures outlining how staff will provide services. All contract conditions including special conditions, IDPH policies and guidelines must be followed. Per 7 CFR 246.26(d)(1)(i), applicant and participant confidentiality must be maintained no matter how the information is provided. Elements that may need extra consideration include:

- State of Iowa information technology standards must be followed. Personal electronic equipment may not be used to provide health care services, staff must use work issued electronic equipment for all services (e.g. tablets, computers, etc.). Staff must have a secure internet connection and/or VPN, hotspot or other secure internet option. Open/Public Wifi connections may not be used. Review Office of the Chief Information Officer policies, General Conditions, and your Agency contract.
 - Using work issued cell phones/phone lines is best. Individuals not employed by the agency cannot have access to the incoming and outgoing phone numbers, voicemails left, texts, or answer the phone.
- Staff must have a private space designated for the delivery of services where conversations cannot be overheard or documents/documentation be viewed by others not employed by the agency.
 - Many organizations are requiring work from home during this time and children are not in school. Common areas of the home, or a room shared with someone else also teleworking, but not employed by the agency should not occur due to confidentiality reasons.
 - Provide staff training with Agency expectations for providing professional services while teleworking. Issues to cover may include checking environment for what is visible in the background that could create distractions or make a client less comfortable, minimizing and handling interruptions that may be unavoidable such as dog’s barking, pet gaining access to the room, neighborhood or family noise, etc. This is intended to be proactive and positive so staff are prepared and don’t become overly flustered in the moment, not because there is a doubt that services can be provided in a professional manner.
 - Agencies must review policies and procedures for providing services, especially sensitive services to assure staff have the resources needed to respond to client needs when not present with the client.

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