MEMO

March 9, 2020

To: DCYF Grantees

From: Maria Su

Re: COVID-19 Message to Grantees

Dear Grantees,

As of March 6, 5PM, the impacts of the Novel Coronavirus COVID-19 have begun to feel closer to home here in San Francisco. Last week, Mayor London Breed announced that the City had begun emergency preparation activities. Yesterday, the Mayor’s office confirmed San Francisco’s first two cases of COVID-19 infection and SFUSD decided to close Lowell High School upon the discovery of a student’s parent as one of the infected cases. Mayor Breed, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) today announced aggressive new recommendations for San Francisco to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the community. In light of this rapidly evolving situation, my staff and I are working hard with our City partners to ensure a continuum of supports and coordinated efforts are in place to serve our community-based organizations and service providers.

A viral outbreak on the scale of COVID-19 can bring a lot of concern for ourselves, our colleagues and the young people we serve in our programs. This concern can be easily exacerbated by both the uncertainty of the situation and lack of knowledge about how public agencies like DCYF will respond. We are hoping to lessen some of that uncertainty for our grantees by providing some details about our approach:

DCYF Operations & Staff: DCYF has already begun to create plans for the continuity of our operations in the event that additional restrictions or closures are instituted by the DEM and DPH. DCYF has place the practices, policies and approaches that will allow our staff to continue to perform our core operations whether or not we are physically able to report to our office.
know that the ability for our grantees to continue their work is partially contingent on the work DCYF does to process workplans, contracts and invoices as well as the availability of our staff to respond to needs and questions.

**Potential SFUSD Closures:** Mayor London Breed’s Emergency Declaration noted that schools are actively planning how they would manage widespread closures. While San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), in coordination with the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH), has not yet determined that widespread school closures are necessary, DCYF is still planning for the possibility. In the event that SFUSD does decide to shutdown, DCYF will advise our programs to also temporarily pause their programming. We would take this approach due to the large numbers of SFUSD students who engage in DCYF-funded programs both at their schools and in the community. While we cannot mandate that programs close under these circumstances, we would advise it out of an abundance of caution.

**Paying Staff During a Shutdown:** Grantees have already begun to contact us to ask if DCYF will pay for staffing costs during a shutdown. DCYF is fully aware of the critical nature of this question as well as the potential for major disruption to our grantees’ staff in the event that they are not able to work due to closures. DCYF is in active conversations with our City Partners to develop guidance around allowable payments. We will provide additional updates once the finalized guidance is available.

**Emergency Planning & Communication:** Regardless of whether there are widespread closures of schools and other institutions, DCYF strongly encourages our grantees to create or update Emergency Plans for their programming, operations and staff. In addition, DCYF also strongly advises agencies to actively communicate with their program participants and their families about their plans.

**Getting Up To Date on Invoicing, Workplans and Budget Revisions:** Widespread closures and other emergency measures could limit the ability for CBO staff to report to work or continue normal operations. In anticipation of this possibility, DCYF strongly encourages grantees to submit any outstanding workplans, invoices and budget revisions.

**Community Events & Other Medium to Large Gatherings:** The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) released aggressive recommendations to reduce the spread COVID-19. Today’s recommendations for social distancing have a goal of reducing the occasions when large numbers of people come together and potentially are exposed to the virus that is circulating in our community. The recommendations protect the health of vulnerable populations, and ensure that essential public services, such as schools and transportation, are taking steps to protect the public. For any medium to large gatherings, DPH recommends cancelling non-essential events.

- Recommend cancelling or postponing large gatherings, such as concerts, sporting events, conventions or large community events.
- Do not attend any events or gatherings if sick.
- For events that aren’t cancelled, we recommend:
Having hand washing capabilities, hand sanitizers and tissues available.
Frequently cleaning high touch surface areas like counter tops and hand rails.
Finding ways to create physical space to minimize close contact as much as possible.

This recommendation mirrors the actions being taken in many other municipalities and are informed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. DCYF will remain in contact with DPH and will make determinations about how to implement any upcoming DCYF sponsored events in accordance with their guidance.

Rejecting Xenophobia & Discrimination: We must be mindful of the threat of xenophobia in the context of COVID-19 and future outbreaks in order to reduce discrimination, harm and violence. DCYF acknowledges that misinformation about the outbreak has led to racist and xenophobic acts of violence and bullying. This behavior is unacceptable and harmful. We stand against this misinformed response and continue our commitment to creating a compassionate and responsive community. We rely on and support you, our service providers, to help protect the children, youth and families you serve by standing up against hate and helping our communities remain informed.

Recommendations for COVID-19 Preparedness: The best way for all San Franciscans to reduce their risk of getting sick, as with seasonal colds or the flu, still applies to prevent COVID-19:
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your cough or sneeze.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Try alternatives to shaking hands, like an elbow bump or wave.
- If you have recently returned from a country, state or region with ongoing COVID-19 infections, monitor your health and follow the instructions of public health officials.
- There is no recommendation to wear masks at this time to prevent yourself from getting sick.

You can also prepare for the possible disruption caused by an outbreak. Preparedness actions include:
- Prepare to work from home if that is possible for your job, and your employer.
- Make sure you have a supply of all essential medications for your family.
- Prepare a child care plan if you or a care giver are sick.
- Make arrangements about how your family will manage a school closure.
- Plan for how you can care for a sick family member without getting sick yourself.
- Take care of each other and check in by phone with friends, family and neighbors that are vulnerable to serious illness or death if they get COVID-19.
- Keep common spaces clean to help maintain a healthy environment for you and others. Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned regularly with disinfecting sprays, wipes or common household cleaning products.
**How to Stay Informed:** The status of COVID-19 in San Francisco and the Bay Area is changing rapidly, and the City is on top of all developments. DCYF has up-to-date information online to help you protect, prepare and know the facts. To stay informed, check the online resources below for up-to-the-minute updates, call 3-1-1 for guidance regarding COVID-19 public health safety information, and sign up to receive official updates from the City & County about COVID-19 via text message by texting COVID19SF to 888-777.

- San Francisco Department of Public Health
- San Francisco Department of Emergency Management
- SFUSD COVID-19 Resources for Students and Families

As a department, we are committed to working in partnership with our City and School District partners to provide you with the support you need to keep your staff and communities – safe, informed and resourced. If you have any immediate questions or concerns, please reach out to your Program Specialists.

In community,
Maria Su, Psy.D.
Executive Director