Welcome to the CMS In the City: COVID19 Edition

All of us here at DCYF hope you and your loved ones remain safe and well during these challenging times. In this edition, you will find information about automatic approvals for budget revisions; how our grant requirements (e.g., survey administration, performance measures) are changing in the face of the COVID-19 situation; and how to track new activities and services you are providing that meet the COVID-19-related needs of the communities you serve (e.g., emergency childcare, virtual services).

DCYF Budget Revision Automatic Approvals

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Shelter in Place Orders, several grantees, in coordination with the Service Provider Working Group, have requested a more flexible and expedient budget revision process for DCYF grants. To address this request, DCYF staff worked with Cityspan to move the traditional Excel-based budget modification process online to the CMS. Grantees may access this updated process on April 15, 2020. Please see this document for details.

Grant Requirements

Youth Experience Surveys

Given that COVID-19 has disrupted grantee schedules for administering the DCYF Youth Experience Survey, this requirement is waived for FY2019-20. That said, some grantees may still have an interest in the survey results and administering the survey, particularly if they are still in regular contact with their youth participants. DCYF will continue to provide support to these grantees by providing them with a web link to administer the youth survey online through SurveyMonkey. Grantees that have previously administered a paper version of the survey will be permitted to administer the online version of the survey (we previously discouraged this practice), and DCYF will provide grantees that have collected more than 10 surveys with the summary results through the grantee year-end reports.
Performance Measures →

Given that many grantees have been forced to shut down or are delivering different types of services and/or did not get an opportunity to administer the youth survey, DCYF performance measures for FY2019-20 are waived. Performance measure results will not be included in grantee year-end reports.

Consent Forms →

Our expectation is that grantees will continue to collect consent forms from new participants that permit the agency to share personal information with DCYF. A writeable PDF consent form has been uploaded to the Resources Tab in CMS to facilitate the electronic collection of these consent forms. Grantees may also continue to use their existing processes for collecting consent forms. More information is on page 4.

COVID19 Activity and Participation Tracking in CMS

The section provides guidance on how to track new COVID-19 related activities and services that DCYF will be supporting. Examples are also provided. Guidance is separated out by CMS Left Hand Menu tab.

New Workplan Version →

Grantees that are providing activities and services that DCYF will be supporting and that they did not originally plan to provide, such as activities offered online or via telephone, should initiate a workplan revision with their Program Specialist to document these activities and services on their workplan. If the changes do not have any budgetary impacts, grantees should request a “New Version (Without Budget)” revision. Please see below for examples of when a new workplan version and new activities should be created.

Workplan: Budget →

Please see this document for updates to the Budget form in CMS.

Workplan: Services & Projections →

A new “Virtual/Remote – COVID19” option has been added to the Program Site Type field under the Service Sites section. Grantees who are providing new COVID-19-related activities from a new virtual/remote location are encouraged to add a new service site and select this option. Please see page 5 for screenshots.

Examples:

Let’s say the Youth Art Program was providing art programming at a school site before COVID-19, but has now shifted its services to virtual or remote locations. Also, instead of its usual art programming it is now providing COVID-19-related counseling through phone and Zoom meetings. In this situation, the grantee should initiate a workplan revision, add a new “Virtual/Remote – COVID19” service site...
and then add a new “COVID19” activity on the Projected Activities form. (See the next section for more information on the new “COVID19” activity category.)

However, a workplan revision would not be necessary if Youth Art Program decided to continue its art programming but just from a virtual/remote location, like their art teachers’ homes. Instead, in this scenario, we encourage the grantee to note the shift in their monthly invoice narrative (see page 3).

Another example where a workplan revision is not necessary is a grantee who was providing case management services on an individual basis through the phone prior to COVID19 and they continue to provide these services during Shelter-In-Place.

Revising Other Projections

Revisions to program completion hours, projections by age, and average daily attendance projections are not necessary. These fields are related to DCYF performance measures and performance measures will be waived for FY2019-20.

Workplan: Projected Activities

A new “COVID19” activity category has been added to the Activity Category field in the Projected Activities form. It is available for group activities, individual activities, and events. Grantees that are providing new activities and services that DCYF will be supporting and that they did not originally plan to provide, e.g. COVID-19-related case management, are encouraged to add a new activity and to select this activity category. Please see page 5 for screenshots.

Examples:

Let’s say Youth Art Program was providing art programming at a school site before COVID-19, but has now shifted its services to virtual or remote locations. Also, instead of art programming it is now providing COVID-19-related counseling through phone and video chats. In this situation, the grantee should initiate a workplan revision, add a new “Virtual/Remote – COVID19” service site and then add a new “COVID19” activity on the Projected Activities form.

Another example of when a workplan revision is necessary is when the programming has completely shifted but the service site remains the same. Let’s say the Kids Afterschool Program was providing comprehensive afterschool programming (homework help, enrichment activity, etc) for youth in grades 6 and up at their own site before COVID19. But now in response to COVID19, they are only providing sports activities for youth of all ages still at their own site, during the weekends as a way to provide relief to parents (following all social distancing and health guidelines, of course). In this situation, we would expect this grantee to add a new activity on their Projected Activities form and assign the “COVID19” activity category to the activity.
Invoices: Monthly Narrative →

To better understand how grantees are dealing with the impacts of the COVID-19 situation, we made a few minor changes to grantee invoicing. We (1) added an introductory paragraph to the top of the invoice requesting that grantees specifically address the impact of the COVID19 pandemic on their programming in their responses to the narrative questions and (2) removed response character limits (currently 880 characters). Please see page 5 for screenshots.

Participants/Staff, Activities →

After workplan revisions have been reviewed and approved by Program Specialists, grantees should begin reporting into CMS the activities and participants related to the new services documented on the workplan. Our expectation is that grantees will continue to collect consent forms from new participants that permit the agency to share personal information with DCYF. A writeable PDF consent form has been uploaded to the Resources Tab in CMS to facilitate the electronic collection of these consent forms. Grantees may also continue to use their existing processes for collecting consent forms.

Resources – Grant Expectations, Other Files →

The writeable PDF consent form can be found here in the Resources Tab under Grant Expectations. The file name is “DCYF Consent Form - Writeable April 2020.”

FEMA Form 214 has been uploaded to the Other Files section of this tab.
Screenshots

Screenshot of Virtual/Remote – COVID19 Program Site Location (Services & Projections)

Because DCYF will not be using this data and because address and phone number fields are required, grantees are encouraged to enter generic text for staff home addresses and phone numbers.

Screenshot of COVID19 Activity Category (Projected Activities)

The COVID19 activity category is also available for Individual Activities and Events.

Screenshot of New COVID19 Guidance in Monthly Invoice - Narrative