



**Rutherford County Department of Social Services**  
**Procedures for Reducing the Risk of COVID-19 for Consumers and Employees**

1. All employees have their temperature checked upon arriving at work for the first time each day. If an employee has a temperature of 100.4 or higher, they must go home and not return to work until they have been fever free for 24 hours. Employees are strongly encouraged to be tested for COVID-19 if they have a fever. If tested, they may return to work upon receiving a negative test result.
2. Employees should wear a mask when in the lobby area if there are consumers or visitors present, and the employee is doing more than just passing through. Employees should wear a mask when they enter the lobby to pick up or talk to a consumer or visitor.
3. Any employee exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must go home and not return until they no longer exhibit these symptoms. Employees are strongly encouraged to be tested. If tested, they may return to work upon receiving a negative test result. An employee that is tested is entitled to Emergency Sick Leave while quarantined awaiting the test results. If they regularly work from home, they can continue to do so while awaiting their test results with no leave hours used.
4. Any employee directly exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 should immediately leave the office, be tested, and not return until receiving a negative test result if they were directly exposed 2 days prior to them being tested (per CDC and Health Department Guidelines). An employee that is tested is entitled to Emergency Sick Leave while quarantined awaiting the test results. If they regularly work from home, they can continue to do so while awaiting their test results with no leave hours used.
5. Any employee that has been exposed to someone who has been exposed to another person testing positive for COVID-19 is not required to leave work, but will be encouraged to do so until the test result of the person they were exposed to is confirmed as negative; if the person the employee was exposed to does not get tested, the employee should be tested; if a positive result occurs, the employee should be tested and remain home until they receive a negative test result. An employee that is tested is entitled to Emergency Sick Leave while quarantined awaiting the test results. If they regularly work from home, they can continue to do so while awaiting their test results with no leave hours used.
6. Any employee with a household member who has been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 should remain home until the household member receives a negative test; if the household member receives a positive result, the employee should be tested and remain home until they receive a negative test. If the household member does not get tested, the employee should be tested. An employee that is tested is entitled to Emergency Sick Leave while quarantined awaiting the test results. If they regularly work from home, they can continue to do so while awaiting their test results with no leave hours used.

7. Any employee that has vacationed away from the county at a location with reported high numbers of COVID-19 cases should schedule a COVID-19 test with the Health Department or other provider upon their return. If the employee is not exhibiting symptoms, they are not required to quarantine, but upon returning to work should wear a mask at all times when not in their office until they receive their test results. If any employee is working from home and will not be in the office for 14 days he/she will not be required to be tested. If an employee travels outside of the United States, all procedures of the CDC will be followed.
8. Any employee that test positive for COVID-19 should follow all quarantine requirements prescribed by the Health Department and be fever free without the aid of medication and symptom free for 72 hours before returning to work.
9. In any situation where an employee is required to remain at home due to COVID-19 and they are eligible for E Sick Leave, the employee may work from home during part or all of that time if they choose and use E sick leave for any time not working.
10. Signs are posted at entrances and at the reception windows in Buildings A/B and C instructing consumers that are experiencing, or have experienced within the past 14 days, fever, cough, or trouble breathing, to step outside or return to their car and call the receptionist (direct number listed) and they will be assisted by phone.
11. All consumers that come to the receptionist window should be screened using the *COVID-19 Screening Questions for Visitors* and have their temperature checked. If the questionnaire indicates the consumer is at risk and/or their temperature is 100.4 or higher, they will be asked to step outside or return to their vehicle and they will be assisted by phone. When this happens, the consumer should be given the direct number of the employee that they need to speak with, and the number of the consumer should be taken to ensure that contact can be made.
12. When consumers come into the office to transact business, including to apply for services or to make a Child Protective Services or Adult Protective Services Report, the employee responsible should attempt to conduct the business without taking the client to the central office areas. This may include taking a phone number and conducting the business by phone, having the consumer sign needed paperwork and then conducting the interview by phone, going into a conference room or other available common space, taking information to their car, etc. Please note that a consumer's business with the Agency is confidential and should not be conducted in the lobby unless you can ensure that others cannot overhear and always ensure that this is agreeable with the consumer.
13. A drop box is available near the entrance of the lobby of Building C for consumers that just need to drop off information.
14. Employees should not schedule appointments for consumers when business can be conducted by telephone or other means such as email, etc.
15. When an employee is engaged in contact with a consumer in the lobby, outside the building, at their car, in the employee's office, in the field, etc., they should wear a mask.

16. Employees are encouraged to wear a mask when engaging other employees in their offices or in common areas, but this is not required. If an employee does not feel comfortable having another employee in their office because they are not wearing a mask, or refuses to wear one, it is the first employee's prerogative to choose to conduct any business by telephone.
17. All consumers and members of the public visiting the Agency must wear a mask. If they do not have one, one will be provided for them. The Governor's Executive Order includes exceptions to the requirement to wear a mask in public. Those that would be applicable to visitors to the Agency are:
  - Should not wear a face covering due to any medical or behavioral condition or disability (including, but not limited to, any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious or incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to put on or remove the face covering without assistance);
  - Is under eleven years of age;
  - Is seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing-impaired in a way that requires the mouth to be visible;
  - Is giving a speech for a broadcast or to an audience;
  - Is temporarily removing his or her face covering to secure government or medical services or for identification purposes;
  - Is a child whose parent, guardian, or responsible person has been unable to place the face covering safely on the child's face.
18. If a visitor refuses to wear a mask and none of the exceptions apply, the receptionist should complete their business with them, ask them to have a seat, and contact their supervisor or another supervisor. The supervisor will determine whether to enforce the mask requirement based on the situation.
19. In order to conserve our limited supply of disposable masks, employees should wear a cloth mask that has been provided by the Agency or one they have acquired themselves. Please remember that these masks can be washed and should be washed on a regular basis.
20. After any meeting/visit held in an office or conference room in the Agency, it is the responsibility of the employee conducting the meeting/visit to wipe down the desk, doorknobs, table, chairs, writing utensils, and other surfaces that were touched during the meeting/visit.
21. Receptionists are responsible for wiping down the area around the receptionist windows several times per day and surfaces that are touched during contact with a consumer with antibacterial cleaner.
22. All employees should practice social distancing when working in the office or in the field.
23. Internal meetings in the office should be limited only to those necessary. Managers and Supervisors should use conference calling to conduct meetings and only meet in groups when necessary. When necessary, meetings should be conducted in areas that allow for social distancing for all that attend.
24. Out of County travel should be limited to only that which is necessary to meet the needs of consumers or for required trainings or meetings that cannot be satisfied by any other means.
25. Court ordered supervised visitation between parents and children in foster care or other out of home placements should be held at other locations such as in a home, a public park, or outside at DSS when available and appropriate. When visitation is held in the DSS office, the Visitation Room should be utilized when available, which is away from the office areas. Any area used for

visitation should be sanitized before and after a visit and social distancing should be practiced during the visit.

26. When a DSS employee provides transportation for visits or transportation for consumers for any reason, a mask should be worn by the driver and all passengers, including children over the age of 2.



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