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**CDS Work Arrangements, Fall 2020**

Issued August 18, 2020

After reviewing the recommendations issued by Maine CDC and MDOE and the wide variety of plans that various entities have put into place as Maine moves to the next stage of its COVID response, CDS and MDOE have developed the following guidance regarding work arrangements for CDS staff.

Beginning, August 31st, CDS staff will be required to be physically present in the regional CDS site for at least a portion of their scheduled work hours. The amount of time that individual staff members will be required to be physically present will be determined by regional CDS Site Leadership and will be based on child and site needs, as well as assigned duties. Regional CDS Site Leadership will work with staff to determine a schedule which ensures that social distancing can be maintained. In addition, CDS has procured masks, hand sanitizer, and other PPE for staff at the regional CDS sites.

Staff may also be required to be physically present in the regional CDS sites to accommodate the needs of families. As many of you are aware, barriers such as technology and families for whom English is their second language, have presented challenges in convening IEP/IFSP meetings with the full participation of families. In some cases, family-specific variables have presented challenges in conducting Routines-Based Interviews, completing evaluations, and providing services. In these situations, meetings, evaluations, and services may occur in the regional CDS site with the proper precautions in place.

When physically present in the regional CDS site, staff must observe the precautionary measures in place, based on CDC guidelines, which include social distancing, the use of hand sanitizer, frequent handwashing, regular cleaning of one’s work space, and the use of a face masks when physical distancing isn’t possible or you are moving around the building. Facemasks must also be worn when interacting with children or their family members. All visitors to the site must wear facemasks.

Some staff members may be reluctant to return to work due to underlying medical issues. If a staff member has an underlying medical issue that may require accommodations, they are encouraged to obtain documentation from their physician and provide that documentation to the regional CDS Site Director.

Due to this shift in work arrangements, beginning August 31st, CDS staff will no longer be reimbursed for travel to and from the office. Staff for whom a work day may start or end at a location other than the regional CDS site should calculate mileage reimbursement based on the CDS Mileage Reimbursement policy. Also beginning August 31st, the use of ‘administrative’ time to accommodate potential gaps between hours worked and hours scheduled will no longer be permitted.

Thank you for your hard work, dedication, and patience through this entire situation. As the rest of the world has experienced, determining the best way to proceed under these extraordinary circumstances is exceptionally challenging.