Certified Family Home Program
Plan for Resuming Field Work

Through the Course of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Background

In response to COVID-19, Idaho Governor Brad Little proclaimed emergency orders that included authorizing state agencies with licensing/certification responsibilities to “temporarily exercise enforcement discretion, implement temporary rules, and waive licensing and related requirements to maximize access to health care services and provider support in response to COVID-19.” For the Certified Family Home (CFH) Program, the Department of Health and Welfare (which has oversight responsibility for the program) made the decision to temporarily suspend field work (i.e., certifying agents visiting homes to conduct surveys, which are the inspections of the home, services, and records to determine compliance with CFH rules) and instead use desk reviews for all survey activities except investigating complaints alleging immediate danger to residents.

As Idahoans have changed their daily routines to “flatten the curve,” the state has seen steadily decreasing COVID-19 infections. In response, the governor has introduced stages of reopening society. Stage 4 of the governor’s plan allows visits to senior living facilities to resume, provided that diligent hygiene and physical distancing with residents is practiced.

The department feels that when the governor declared Stage 4 to be in effect, it became appropriate for certifying agents to resume visits to certified family homes in a limited capacity. If at any time the governor orders a move backwards in the stages, the department will suspend this plan and again certify providers based solely on desk reviews.

This document describes the plan for both CFH providers and certifying agents to follow beginning the month after implementation of Stage 4.

The Goal

The mission of the department’s CFH Management Team is to promote and protect the health and safety of Idahoans receiving services in certified family homes. Certifying agents know that seeing and speaking with residents is the best way to fulfill that mission. However, CFH residents generally have underlying physical conditions that place them at higher risk of complications due to COVID-19. Long exposure to people other than immediate household members is inadvisable for CFH providers, their families, their residents, and certifying agents. The goal of this plan is to find the best way for certifying agents to safely interact with residents and their providers to verify they have a safe living environment and adequate care is being provided in compliance with CFH rules.
When the certifying agent contacts the CFH provider to schedule the recertification survey, the following options will be discussed, and the best option for that provider will be agreed upon together.

**Option 1: Virtual Survey**

With technology available today, it is possible (so long as both the CFH provider and the certifying agent have the ability to use the technology together) for a survey to be conducted completely remotely through portable telecommunication devices (such as smart phones, tablets, or laptops) and applications (e.g., FaceTime, Skype, WebEx, Zoom, etc.). So long as the provider can share live, streaming video while moving around the home, the certifying agent will not physically need to be on-site to conduct a survey. The survey may take place virtually through a live video feed. This is the best and safest option.

**CFH Provider**
1. Be available at your home at the appointed time.
2. Connect with the certifying agent at the appointed time through the agreed upon application.
3. Follow the instructions of the certifying agent during the survey.
   - You will be asked to tour your entire home, test fire safety equipment, show your records, and allow the residents to speak privately (if they so choose) with the certifying agent.

**Certifying Agent**
1. Schedule an appointment with the provider at least 30 days prior to the expiration of the certificate.
2. Determine which technology the CFH provider can use.
3. Ensure that application is loaded on your state cell phone or laptop.
4. Connect with the provider at the appointed time through the agreed upon application.
5. Conduct the survey using the Compliance Study Tool.
   - Give the provider technical assistance as appropriate.
6. Complete the survey.
   - Follow regular survey processing protocols.
   - Issue the certificate when the provider is found to be in substantial compliance.
   - As appropriate, cite deficiencies and recommend remedies to the program manager according to the program’s progressive enforcement philosophy.
   - Support staff will send the provider the certificate and complete survey processing.

**Option 2: Hybrid Survey**

This option combines a desk review with a brief on-site home inspection. When the CFH provider lacks the ability to share live streaming video through a portable device, but can scan/email, text, fax, or easily make and send copies of records to the certifying agent, this is the best option. The certifying agent will review documentation from the office, and schedule with the provider a time to make a brief home visit.
CFH Provider

1. Submit the list of requested documents to the certifying agent by the due date.
2. Be available at your home at the time scheduled with the certifying agent.
   - The certifying agent will contact you the day of the appointment to confirm the following:
     i. No one is sick (specifically cough, fever, or shortness of breath);
     ii. No one has recently lost their sense of taste or smell;
     iii. No one has traveled to a COVID-19 hotspot within the last 14 days.
   - Certificates can be extended up to 30 days when necessary.
3. Observe infection control precautions during the visit.
   - Prior to the visit, put all pets in enclosed areas where they will not touch the certifying agent during the home inspection.
   - Ensure all members of the household are wearing cloth face coverings extending over their noses and mouths, with the following exceptions:
     i. Children under the age of 2;
     ii. Those who have difficulty breathing; and
     iii. Those unable to remove a mask without assistance.
   - Maintain social distance of at least 6 feet between all members of the household and the certifying agent.
   - Failure to observe infection control precautions described above will result in the certifying agent ending the visit.
4. Follow the instructions of the certifying agent during the survey.
   - You will be asked for a tour of your entire home, to test fire/CO alarms, and to allow the residents to speak privately (if they so choose) with the certifying agent.

Certifying Agent

1. Send the CFH provider the list of documents needed to recertify the home (note: this is the list of documents for a full recertification survey).
   - Give a due date for submission of these documents no later than 30 days prior to the expiration of the certificate (e.g., due date of July 1 if the certificates expires July 31).
2. Schedule an appointment with the provider for a brief home inspection to occur at least 30 days before the expiration of the certificate.
3. Call the CFH provider the day of the home visit and ensure:
   i. No one is sick (specifically cough, fever, or shortness of breath);
   ii. No one has recently lost their sense of taste or smell;
   iii. No one has traveled to a COVID-19 hotspot within the last 14 days.
   - If any member of the household or the certifying agent falls into one of three criteria listed above, reschedule the home inspection at least 3 weeks out.
   - Certificates can be extended up to 30 days when necessary.
4. Upon arriving at the home, but before approaching the door, take infection control precautions.
   - Use hand sanitizer.
   - Put on a cloth facemask.
5. Greet and introduce yourself to the provider.
   - Always maintain social distance of at least six (6) feet (do not shake hands).
• Explain your visit must be under 10 minutes.
• Explain that, due to the speed of the survey, you would like to video record your inspection so that you may refer to the recording later when completing your report.

6. Use your state cell phone to begin a video recording.
7. Minimize transmissible moments while in the home.
   • Continue to observe social distancing protocols of at least 6 feet from any person during the visit.
   • Do not touch anything while in the home; ask the provider to open doors, test alarms, etc.
     o If something is accidentally touched, immediately use hand sanitizer.
   • Remain standing during the visit.
   • Proceed with the home inspection so long as members of the household are observing infection control precautions (pets put away, face coverings in place, and social distancing at least 6 feet). If precautions are not being observed, end the visit and reschedule later.

8. Briefly observe residents and interview those who are capable of responding.
   • For those residents interviewed, leave your business card and invite them to contact you by phone or email since your visit today must be brief.

9. Quickly tour the entire home.
   • Capture a video of each room.
   • If conducting an initial certification study or relocation survey, take room measurements.
   • Capture a video of the location of fire extinguishers.
   • Capture a video of smoke/CO alarm tests.

10. Conclude the inspection.
    • Thank the provider for their time and inform them you will finish your review at your office. A certificate will be sent to them once substantial compliance is established.
    • Stop the video recording.

11. Return to the vehicle and take infection control precautions.
    • Use hand sanitizer.
    • Remove your facemask.
    • Use hand sanitizer again.

2. Complete the survey after returning to the office (telecommuting is encouraged).
    • Follow regular survey processing protocols.
    • Issue the certificate when the provider is found to be in substantial compliance.
    • As appropriate, cite deficiencies and recommend remedies to the program manager according to the program’s progressive enforcement philosophy.
    • Support staff will send the provider the certificate and complete survey processing.

Option 3: Modified On-site Survey

When the CFH provider lacks the ability to share live streaming video from a portable device and effectively scan/email, text, fax, or make and send copies of records to the certifying agent, an on-site survey is the last option. The certifying agent will schedule with the provider a time to make a brief
home visit, during which documentation will be collected from the provider and reviewed by the certifying agent outside the home but before the certifying agent leaves the property (e.g., the certifying agent could review the documents on outside patio furniture or in their vehicle).

**CFH Provider**

1. Be available at your home at the time scheduled with the certifying agent.
   - The certifying agent will contact you the day of the appointment to confirm the following:
     i. No one is sick (specifically cough, fever, or shortness of breath);
     ii. No one has recently lost their sense of taste or smell;
     iii. No one has traveled to a COVID-19 hotspot within the last 14 days.
   - Certificates can be extended up to 30 days when necessary.

2. Observe infection control precautions during the visit.
   - Prior to the visit, put all pets in enclosed areas where they will not touch the certifying agent during the home inspection.
   - Ensure all members of the household are wearing cloth face coverings extending over their noses and mouths, with the following exceptions:
     i. Children under the age of 2;
     ii. Those who have difficulty breathing; and
     iii. Those unable to remove a mask without assistance.
   - Maintain social distance of at least 6 feet between all members of the household and the certifying agent.
   - Failure to observe infection control precautions described above will result in the certifying agent ending the visit.

3. Follow the instructions of the certifying agent during the survey.
   - You will be asked to provide all records required to recertify the home. Bring these records to the certifying agent at the door. You may offer the use of outside patio furniture; alternatively, the certifying agent will return to the vehicle with your records.
   - After the certifying agent has completed the records review, they will return your documents and begin the home inspection. You will be asked for a tour of your entire home, to test fire/CO alarms, and to allow the residents to speak privately (if they so choose) with the certifying agent.

**Certifying Agent**

1. Schedule an appointment with the provider for a brief home inspection and record review to occur at least 30 days before the expiration of the certificate.

2. Call the CFH provider the day of the home visit and ensure:
   i. No one is sick (specifically cough, fever, or shortness of breath);
   ii. No one has recently lost their sense of taste or smell;
   iii. No one has traveled to a COVID-19 hotspot within the last 14 days.
   - If any member of the household or the certifying agent falls into one of three criteria listed above, reschedule the home inspection at least 3 weeks out.
   - Certificates can be extended up to 30 days when necessary.

3. Upon arriving at the home, but before approaching the door, take infection control precautions.
   - Use hand sanitizer.
- Put on a cloth facemask.

4. Greet and introduce yourself to the provider.
   - Always maintain social distance of at least six (6) feet (do not shake hands).
   - Request that the provider bring you all records required for recertification.
   - Explain that you will conduct the records review outside of the home (either in your vehicle or, if the provider prefers, on outside patio furniture if available).

5. Conduct the records review using the Compliance Study Tool on your laptop.
   - Between touching documents and touching the laptop, use hand sanitizer.

6. Upon completion of the records review, return documents to the provider.
   - Use hand sanitizer after handing off the documents.

7. Request a brief home inspection.
   - Explain your time spent in the home must be under 10 minutes.
   - Explain that, due to the speed of the survey, you would like to video record your inspection so that you may refer to the recording later when completing your report.

8. Use your state cell phone to begin a video recording.

9. Minimize transmissible moments while in the home.
   - Continue to observe social distancing protocols of at least 6 feet from any person during the visit.
   - Do not touch anything while in the home; ask the provider to open doors, test alarms, etc.
     - If something is accidentally touched, immediately use hand sanitizer.
   - Remain standing during the visit.
   - Proceed with the home inspection so long as members of the household are observing infection control precautions (pets put away, face coverings in place, and social distancing at least 6 feet). If precautions are not being observed, end the visit and reschedule later.

10. Briefly observe residents and interview those who are capable of responding.
    - For those residents interviewed, leave your business card and invite them to contact you by phone or email since your visit today must be brief.

11. Quickly tour the entire home.
    - Capture a video of each room.
    - If an initial certification study or relocation survey, take room measurements.
    - Capture a video of the location of fire extinguishers.
    - Capture a video of smoke/CO alarm tests.

12. Conclude the inspection.
    - Thank the provider for their time and inform them you will finish your review at your office. A certificate will be sent to them once substantial compliance is established.
    - Stop the video recording.

13. Return to the vehicle and take infection control precautions.
    - Use hand sanitizer.
    - Remove your cloth facemask.
    - Use hand sanitizer again.

14. Complete the survey after returning to the office (telecommuting is encouraged).
    - Follow regular survey processing protocols.
    - Issue the certificate when the provider is found to be in substantial compliance.
• As appropriate, cite deficiencies and recommend remedies to the program manager according to the program’s progressive enforcement philosophy.
• Support staff will send the provider the certificate and complete survey processing.

Safety Kits

In the rare event that a certifying agent must have close contact with a resident (e.g., an immediate jeopardy situation requiring transfer of the resident from the home), each certifying agent will have a safety kit available in the vehicle. Besides the normal personal protective equipment the certifying agent carries (cloth facemask and hand sanitizer), this kit will also include the following:

• Face shield
• Gloves
• Disinfectant Wipes