

WSC ADVISORY #2020-030
IDENTIFICATION OF ESSENTIAL CAREGIVERS UNDER DEM EO 20-009

MANDATORY ACTION

EFFECTIVE DATE: SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

The Division of Emergency Management (DEM) issued [Emergency Order \(EO\) No. 20-009](#) on September 1, 2020. This order identifies circumstances in which residents in group homes and foster homes may designate two essential caregivers who are allowed for visitation. Facilities must allow essential caregivers entrance, regardless of whether general visitation is permitted. Essential caregivers must still pass the screening and adhere to the requirements in the EO and of the facility.

DEM EO 20-009 defines essential caregivers as, "...caregivers are those who have been given consent by the resident or his or her representative to provide services and/or assistance with activities of daily living to help maintain or improve the quality of care or quality of life for a facility resident. Essential caregivers include persons who provided services before the pandemic and those who request to provide services...Care or services provided by essential caregivers must be identified in the plan of care or service plan and may include bathing, dressing, eating, and/or emotional support."

It is critical for Waiver Support Coordinators (WSCs) to help APD clients and their families understand the definition of essential caregiver, as well as all requirements designated essential caregivers must follow.

For visitation to occur, WSCs must ensure that designated essential caregivers are identified on the support plan. The support plan must reflect the specific supports which will be provided by these essential caregivers. The WSC will document the designated essential caregivers in one or more of the following sections:

- My Family, Friends, and Support System
- Other People Who Support Me or Work for Me
- Other Funding Sources for Supports
- Other Services Needed for Health and Safety

Any updates to essential caregivers on the support plan must be sent to the provider.

Per WSC Advisory # 2020-023, the Person-Centered Support Plan is now available for use in APD iConnect. WSCs and CDC+ Consultants are to be using this feature for all support plans with a September 1, 2020 effective date and forward. If the support plan is not yet due to be entered in APD iConnect, essential caregiver information must be added into the narrative format in the open support plan. If the support plan is not yet in APD iConnect, the WSC should identify essential caregivers on the "contacts" tab in APD iConnect.

WSC must assist clients and their legal representative in communicating with the licensed facilities where they reside. For more information, please view the [Questions and Answers](#) document developed to assist APD-licensed facilities in complying with all requirements in EO20-009. WSCs should contact the APD Regional Office with any additional questions.