



Alaska's Council on
Domestic Violence
& Sexual Assault

Hello CDVSA Sub-grantees –

Over the past 3-4 days COVID-19 preparation and containment have been moving very fast worldwide, nationally and in Alaska. While things are much worse outside of Alaska in terms of containment of those who have been exposed and/or infected, here in Alaska we are in preparation mode, not full implementation, allowing us time to get ahead of the curve. For those of us who have worked in prevention most of our careers, we recognize that good prevention, planning and preparation initiatives are critical, and if we do the hard work of being prepared by identifying challenges and steps we can take now to mitigate spread of this virus later, we may be able to reduce the likelihood of broader spread of COVID-19 in Alaska. This update is to provide additional information about what is happening at the state level and within the departments, including suggestions for steps you can take to continue your planning and preparation.

- Use already established agency protocol for dealing with emergency operations—such as a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). Your plan should include protocol for quarantine for those within 24/7 shelter programs and service protocol for out-patient services that keep everyone safe;
- Most communities, municipalities and Boroughs have an established COOP – work together with your local government and other service providers to have a consistent approach to this emergency (highly recommended);
- Develop the best accommodations you can within your agency's environment – available space for social distancing, easy modifications to increase distancing (where possible), hours of operation, staff safety policies for interacting with participants and clients, and working with other community non-profit, business and government providers to assist;
- Have a tiered plan beginning with prevention, mitigation, containment and finally quarantine – focus on core services; for those events and services that are not a core service consider reducing/postponing until further notice;
- Begin now identifying critical challenges to provide your core services and make plans for how you can mitigate these concerns if and when more cases are identified—be prepared for the worst case scenario, your planning will pay-off;
- Review your current CDVSA budgets and spending levels to assess what cost categories may have available funds and which ones may need additional funds;



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- If you identify a need to move funds between spending categories, BARS will be expedited as quickly as staffing allows, with a goal of same to next-day turnaround;
- Sub-grantees who encounter emergency expenditures should communicate with CDVSA to explain the need for expenditure without prior approval. CDVSA, as always, will be flexible in the event of unplanned expenditures and will work with the subgrantee on an “after the fact” BAR submission date, to allow for practicality given the subgrantee is experiencing an emergent situation;
- At this time, CDVSA is adhering to the set schedule of due dates for reporting requirements. Reach out to your program coordinator if you are in need of an extended timeline for any reporting requirements. CDVSA will revisit these deadlines as more information about the impacts of COVID-19 unfolds;
- CDVSA staff are working with our Board to create additional contingencies in the event COVID-19 hits crisis levels (more to come later);
- Have a plan for both staff and individuals who utilize your services – maintain staff morale, keep people informed, work together and take care of staff and participants/clients—everyone is feeling vulnerable at this time;
- And finally, use your existing membership organizations for more detailed best practice information about dealing with your specific service delivery issues during this emergency – the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; the Alaska Behavioral Health Association; the Alaska Children’s Alliance; and the Alaska Bar Association.

We know that many of the bullets above are things you are already doing—this is a reminder that we need to keep working the situation. The more planning and preparation we do now, the better our response will be when most needed. While CDVSA will send periodic updates and information, be sure to follow the recommendations from the CDC at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and the Alaska DHSS at <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/default.aspx>; both have great information that is updated regularly as conditions change.

The state of Alaska is working together to develop clear and consistent plans moving forward so the same information is reaching everyone. Having a thoughtful, well prepared plan to prevent, contain and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 is our top priority. Getting through this state of emergency requires everyone working together as individuals, organizations, communities and state government. Have a good week.